SEXUALITY, SOCIAL INEQUALITIES, AND SEXUAL VULNERABILITY AMONG LOW-INCOME YOUTH IN THE CITY OF AYACUCHO, PERU

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ABSTRACT

Sexuality, Social Inequalities, and Sexual Vulnerability among Low-Income Youth in the City of Ayacucho, Peru

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This ethnographic study explores diverse ways in which sexuality and social hierarchies and inequalities interact in the lives of low-income youth who were trained as peer-educators and sexual health and rights advocates in Ayacucho, Peru. It examines three central questions: 1) How are meanings about sexuality related to social hierarchies and social prestige among these youth? 2) How do quotidian manifestations of social inequity shape vulnerability of youth to sexual abuse and sexual risks, and their sexual agency to face these situations? and 3) What are the possibilities and limitations of existent sexual rights educational programs to diminish sexual vulnerability of youth facing diverse forms of inequality, such as economic, gender, ethnic and inter-generational disparities?

I analyze what may be termed as the political economy of sexual vulnerability among low-income youth, and show the concrete ways in which it operates in their everyday life. Likewise, this research studies sexuality as a domain of reproduction, resignification and critique of social inequality and social hierarchies. The context is an Andean city, which in recent decades has experienced incomplete processes of democratization, and also a greater penetration of consumerism and transnational ideas and images. This study also reveals cultural logics of youth about sexual risks and complex dimensions of their sexual and gender agency. In terms of policies and programs, this research offers evidence and reflections about some challenges and limitations of a participatory sexual rights project within a context of poverty and social inequalities in urban low-income areas of Peru.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the youth of Ayacucho and to all the informants who participated in this study for their generosity with their time and for trusting me enough to share their experiences and views. I learned a great deal from them about young people in Ayacucho, their concerns and their hopes.

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DEDICATION

To my mother, Juanita Leau, and my father, Víctor Yon, who passed away while I was writing my dissertation. My eternal gratitude for their love, sacrifices and unconditional support at various times in my life. They have been a superb example of perseverance in the face of adversity and an unfailing source of motivation for me.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to unravel the ways in which discourses and daily manifestations of social inequality and social hierarchies shape sexual vulnerability and sexual agency among low-income youth, and particularly girls, trained as peer-educators and sexual health and right advocates in the city of Ayacucho, Peru. Ayacucho is one of the poorest departments in the south-central Andes of Peru and was the most affected by political violence between the subversive group The Shining Path and the Peruvian State from 1980-2000.

Figure 1: Map of Ayacucho Department

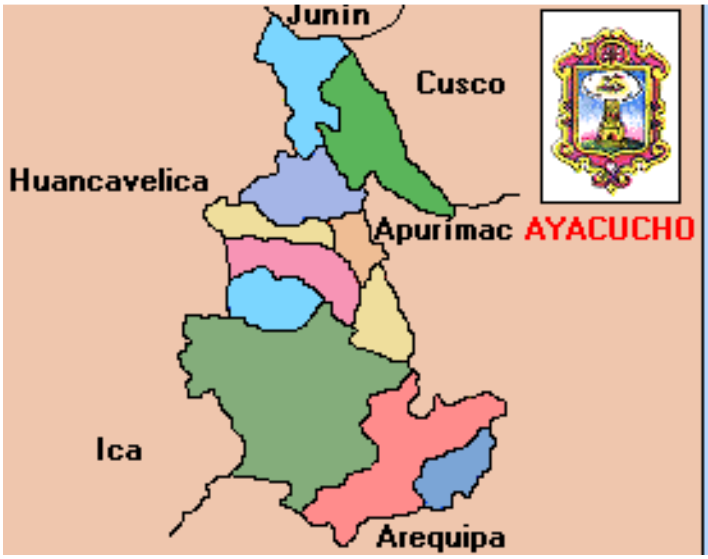

Figure 2: Map of Peru

Likewise, this research studies sexuality as a domain of reproduction, resignification and critique of social inequality and social hierarchies in an Andean city, which in recent decades has experienced incomplete processes of social and political democratization, and also a greater penetration of consumerism and transnational ideas and images. Thus, I analyze

sexuality as a site of constraints and vulnerability shaped by political economy as part of the particular field of public health and sexual risk. Likewise, I also study sexuality as a site in which social life and culture are produced and critiqued by youth and as part of a broader field of social and cultural reproduction and change. Finally, this research offers evidence and reflections about some results, challenges and limitations of a participatory sexual rights project within a context of poverty and social inequalities in urban low-income areas of Peru.

I followed a group of youth who participated in a project promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights in peripheral neighborhoods of the city of Ayacucho[1], between August 2008 and January 2010. The mentioned project is one of several non-governmental organization (NGO) initiatives in Ayacucho that seeks to improve the social situation of low-income youth and promote their rights. As with most projects working on youth sexual and reproductive health in Peru, this three-year project (2007-2009) was carried out by an NGO and funded by international cooperation. The main characteristics of this NGO project were its participatory character and sexual and reproductive rights approach. Using their own words, these youth put a sexual rights and gender equity discourse into workshops, a radio program and on posters they hung in their school classrooms and tried to post on Catholic Church buildings. For the first time, many of them discussed with their school teachers their approach and knowledge about sexuality, contraceptive methods and condom use. Most of these youth become peer-educators and advocates for their sexual health and rights in a conflictive environment. This context was shaped by adult/youth and student/teacher hierarchies, and the significant influence of the Catholic Church's discourse of sexual repression of women in families and state-run schools.

[1] As some youth could be easily identified by people who know them, I decided not to mention the name of the district of the city of Ayacucho where my informants live. I explain this decision in detail in the section on ethical aspects.

At the same time, during my participant observation process, I found, with some exceptions, that these rights discourses and interventions were used by youth mainly in public arenas and in their relationships to teachers, health care providers, local authorities and NGO personnel. Decisions and practices related to their personal (e.g., romantic and sexual) life seemed to be related with more complex negotiations with restrictive, gendered, local expectations, social inequity (gender, intergenerational, social class and ethnic inequities), and complex dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in their everyday world (e.g., within their social networks, and the labor and consumption markets). Conflicts were framed more in terms of adults' norms and transgressions than in terms of adults' norms and youth rights. Cruel paradoxes between the broadening of social and cultural aspirations and limited opportunities to choose often shaped final outcomes. New knowledge, approaches, discourses, and access to formal institutions were not always "real" resources to deal with unplanned pregnancies and sexual abuse, but their social network support was always fundamental.

This ethnographic study explores diverse ways in which sexuality and social hierarchies and inequalities interact in the lives of these low-income youth, who were trained as peer-educators and sexual health and rights advocates. It examines three central questions: 1) How are meanings about young people's sexuality related to social hierarchies and forms of social prestige among low-income youth in the city of Ayacucho? 2) How do different quotidian manifestations of social inequity shape vulnerability of youth to sexual abuse and sexual risks (e.g., unplaned pregnancies, STD and HIV), and their sexual agency to face these situations? and 3) What are the possibilities and limitations of existent sexual rights educational programs to diminish sexual vulnerability of youth facing diverse forms of

inequality, such as unequal access to economic and educational opportunities, gender, ethnic and inter-generational disparities?

I will start analyzing the paradoxical processes of social inclusion and creation of second-class citizens in the city of Ayacucho, which is related to the limited response of the Peruvian State to massive rural to urban migration and social movements demanding services in Ayacucho and other cities of Peru. In subsequent chapters, I demonstrate that the tensions between forms of social inclusion and exclusion of rural migrants and women in the city of Ayacucho are crucial to understanding social and sexual vulnerability of low-income youth, as well as their forms of agency. Likewise, I analyze different forms in which inequalities and hierarchies operate through sexuality, such as the re-creation of categories and forms of moral classification and stigmatization based on sexual behavior, the inclusion or exclusion of certain potential partners, and sexual imposition, control and violence. Particularly, this study illuminates the stratification process based on moral categorization of girls according to their sexual agency, and their position in different social hierarchies. I will also explore the reflexive responses of youth to hegemonic discourses about their sexuality, and study cultural logics of youth related to their sexual rights, sexual vulnerability and sexual risks.

Youth as "Included-Excluded" in a Globalized World

Youth in poor urban neighborhoods of Ayacucho have economic and domestic responsibilities that children usually do not have. Although at 10-11 years old children are accustomed to helping their parents in domestic and economic activities (usually as street or market vendors), youth of 14-15 years or older have to work in different activities, usually in the informal market and sometimes away from their home and in risky and unsafe conditions.

These boys and girls also participate in local and transnational youth cultures, and are commonly exposed to sexualized messages and consumerist ideologies from mass media and the Internet, and in varying levels, to information about gender equality and sexual rights (see Chapters 2 and 3).

Youth who participated in this study can be named using the paradoxical categories of "included-excluded" and "connected-disconnected," following the approach of anthropologist Néstor García Canclini, which accounts for contradictory forms of existence in a globalized world where "each form of disadvantage is associated with a form of belonging, participation or ownership" (García Canclini 2004:79, my translation). I should add that in Ayacucho there are variants among youth regarding how close they are to the axis of inclusion or exclusion. These paradoxical processes that youth in the city of Ayacucho experience are similar to what has been shown in a series of studies focused on the place of youth as social actors in modernity projects exported around the world. This body of work pointed out the consequences of neoliberal globalization for youth in the South, taking into account the complex interactions between transnational political economy and local cultural, social, political and economic dynamics (e.g. Comaroff and Comaroff 1999, 2006; Lukose 2009; Miles 2002; Honwana and Boeck 2005; Maira and Soep 2005). A recurrent theme analyzed in these studies is the chasm between the modernist narrative of infinite progress and the realities of limited economic opportunities for youth living in conditions of poverty and affected by local social hierarchies and political conflicts. At the same time, modernity narratives and the transnational flow of images, information and technologies facilitated by globalization processes are examined as sources of young people's agency and mobilization (Miles 2002; Honwana and Boeck 2005; Maira and Soep 2005). My study explores how

youth interact with forms of social inclusion and discourses about sexual rights and gender equity in contexts of social exclusion and denial of their sexual citizenship.

Sexuality, Social Stratification and Social Inequalities

This study explores the forms in which systems of social hierarchy and inequality operate through sexuality among youth in contexts of poverty. My conceptual framework is informed by approaches that look at sexuality not only as shaped by social hierarchies and inequalities (such as gender, race and social class structures) but also as a domain of structure organizing social relationships with their own particularities (Rubin 1984; Connell and Dowsett 1992).

Feminist anthropologist Gayle Rubin analyzes sexuality as a domain of social stratification where sexual practices, orientations and identities are classified, rewarded or stigmatized according to a hierarchical system of sexual value. This sexual stratification produces inequalities and forms of oppression that in turn re-produce notions of normality, and legitimize sanctions and social prohibitions (Rubin 1984). As highlighted by Miller and Vance (2004), the concept of sexual hierarchy is a useful analytical and practical tool: "The concept of sexual hierarchy is an important analytic device for identifying how a culture evaluates sexual behaviors, relationships, and expressions. Its practical value lies in the way it lays bare the rules for evaluating "legitimate" and "illegitimate" sexuality, making them explicit and subject to evaluation from a human rights perspective" (Miller and Vance 2004:7). In accordance with Rubin's approach, I analyze moral and social hierarchies that are based on girls' forms of sexual agency and over which the Catholic hierarchies have significant influence in Ayacucho. As Rubin proposes, these are religious hierarchies of

sexual value, which operate in a similar way as ideological systems that tend to exclude, marginalize and condemn those who are not considered virtuous or normal (Rubin 1984).

This research is also built on anthropological studies which integrate social constructionist and political economy approaches in the study of the social dimensions of the HIV epidemic (e.g., Farmer 1992; Hirsch et. al. 2007; Parker 1991 and 1999; Padilla 2007). Particularly useful for this research are those studies analyzing the role of gender and sexuality structures in shaping HIV vulnerability among women and men in the context of poverty and social inequality (Farmer et. al. 1993, 1996; Hirsch et.al 2007, 2009; Kammerer et. al. 1995; Paiva 1995, 2000). These studies examine the linkages between large-scale processes in global political economy and the subjective experience and local meanings constructed in specific cultural contexts shaping sexuality and vulnerability to sexual risks. From this point of view, the body is both a "symbolic and material product of social relations" shaped by broader structural factors, such as political exclusion, social inequity in access to opportunities and resources, and racial, ethnic and gender discrimination (Parker 2001: 171). From this perspective, as important as understanding individual behaviors is the study of social and cultural contexts shaping the possibilities of sexual interactions and limiting the agency of individuals and groups in taking charge of their lives (Farmer 1992, 1999; Parker 2001).

The contributions of sexual script theory (Simon and Gagnon 2003; Parker and Gagnon 1995) are useful in analyzing romantic and sexual meanings constructed in everyday interactions. Studies about sexual cultures which analyze categories and systems of classification shared and negotiated by specific social groups, as well as the ways in which these meanings organize sexual interactions (e.g., Parker 1991, 1999; Paiva 2000; Carrillo

2002) are also useful. I will analyze sexual meanings as heterogeneous and dynamic, both locally situated and under influences of an interconnected and globalized world.

My focus will be on the specific ways in which social hierarchies, inequities and cultural logics interact in shaping meanings and practices related to sexual agency, rights and health of low-income youth in Ayacucho. I will follow anthropologist Jennifer Hirsch, when she says: "As we watch people go about the business of living meaningful lives, we should attend carefully to how people choose among these meanings, the ways in which some have a greater latitude of choice than others, and the fact that they may be differentially advantageous to people depending on their social position and the other resources to which they have access" (Hirsch, 2003: 4).

Social and Sexual Vulnerability

A conceptual and practical implication from a political economy and interpretive approach to sexual health is the shift from a focus on risk behavior to a focus on social vulnerability (Ayres et.al. 2006; Parker 2000; Parker and Aggleton 2012) of individuals and groups to get sick or stay unprotected from sexual risks. I study the ways in which the social vulnerability of youth in the city of Ayacucho facilitates their sexual vulnerability, increasing the probability that they will face sexual abuse and sexual risks.

My approach to the relationships between social and sexual vulnerability takes into account the specific contributions from two areas of study and intervention: HIV studies, and urban poverty and development research in countries in the global South. Conceptual frameworks and discussions from both fields are not divergent or disconnected, but both provide complementary insights for my study.

From the study of HIV transmission, I examine the conceptual discussions about sexual risks and social vulnerability, emerged especially from social epidemiology and social medicine (Mann and Tarantola 1996; Ayres 1997; De Pauw 2004). These authors show that while both epidemiological risk and social vulnerability relate conceptually as well as at the experience level, they are still different phenomena. Epidemiological risk is defined as the probability for individuals to become ill or die due to certain behaviors, situations, or characteristics. Social vulnerability, on the other hand, is located at the level of contextual or structural situations generated by multiple factors that weaken subjects or groups in the face of certain dangers or threats, diminishing their response capacity. In that sense, social vulnerability occurs in a moment prior to the risk (which would be a result associated to higher vulnerability), and it allows us to examine and understand how or why some groups are exposed to higher risk levels (Ayres, 1997; Nichiata et al., 2008). Thus, social vulnerability is an indicator of social inequity and inequality, precedes risk and influences importantly the different risks of being infected, falling ill and dying (Ayres 1997).

I also revisit contributions from social sciences to understand the social dimensions of the transmission of the HIV epidemic. These studies (e.g., Farmer 1992; Hirsch et. al. 2007; Parker 1991 and 1999; Padilla 2007) identify social and political factors that shape sexual experiences and structure the possibilities of getting HIV and examine the linkages between large-scale processes in global political economy as well as the subjective experience and local meanings constructed in specific cultural contexts shaping sexuality and vulnerability to sexual risks. In studying structural dimensions shaping the HIV epidemics, anthropologists Paul Farmer, Richard Parker and other authors, used the notion of structural violence, a form of violence rooted in social or political marginalization, poverty, racism, sexism and other

forms of structural inequality which affects people's lives, their health and their agency (Farmer 2003, 2004; Parker 2012). These scholars addressed in this way the basis of social vulnerability of the most affected population groups by the HIV epidemics, such as the forms of oppression and discrimination of communities of men who have sex with other men, and sex workers, marginalization and criminalization of injecting drug users, gender inequalities linked to HIV transmission in the case of women, or economic inequality and injustice associated with the spread of HIV among the poor (Parker 2000: 41). In my study, I am expanding the use of this perspective to look not only at HIV but also at other aspects affecting sexual health and sexual rights of youth, such as sexual abuse.

My analysis of social vulnerability also takes into account poverty and development frameworks about vulnerability and assets (Mosser 1998). Assets are defined as "the series of material and abstract resources over which individuals and households have control and whose mobilization can improve their situation of well-being, avoid a deterioration in their living conditions or reduce their vulnerability" (Kaztman. et al. 2000: 294). Assets are not simply resources for building livelihood that people use to survive and alleviate poverty: "they give them the capabilities to be and act" and the agents' power to reproduce, challenge or change the rules that govern the control, use and trans-formation of resources" (Bebbington 1999: 2022). Examples of youth assets in Ayacucho city are family economic and emotional support, friends and relatives in a better socio-economic position than them, and cultural competence to be an urban youth. Emphasis on the relationship between vulnerability and assets facilitates a more dynamic approach to poverty and helps to identify both: subjects' limitations in response capacities due to situational or structural constraints,

and these subjects' agency for using loopholes to face these constraints (Bebbington et al. 2011: 58).

Practice Theory, Sexuality and Agency

This study follows conceptual orientations of practice theory (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Giddens 1979), which go beyond a dichotomist view of the subjects as completely free or determined by social structures. Although there are differences[2] among proponents of practice theory, a common conceptual starting point is that agents and structures are intertwined and are mutually interdependent, in the sense that structures shape subjects' practices (or "actions" in terms of Giddens), and structures are reproduced or transformed through subjects' active collaboration and in ways which are meaningful for them. Likewise, this approach focuses on power relations and cultural logics which shape the agents' practices and intentions (Ortner 1989; Wardlow 2006).

Although youth in the city of Ayacucho are embedded in social structures that limit their abilities to make decisions and make them vulnerable to undesired pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases or sexual abuse, they are also subjects with their own intentions, with a certain space to play, and ability to develop alternative practices and meanings. This research attempts to illuminate both: the process by which intersecting social and cultural structures become incorporated in youth experiences and everyday decision-making, and the reflexive relationship between youth and social institutions or practices.

[2] For instance, there is a difference between Bourdieu's and Giddens' approaches to the conscious deliberation and awareness of social actors as agents. According to Giddens, in the context of Modernity "each of us not only 'has', but lives a biography reflexively organized in terms of flows of social and psychological information about possible ways of life" (Giddens 1991:14). For Bourdieu (1992), the habitus is a set of internalized schemes through which the actors deals with the social world. This concept embodies agency and autonomy but also pre-reflective action-orientations and unconscious dispositions (Adams 2006).

In this study, sexual agency of youth refers to their capacity to make meaningful decisions about issues related to their sexuality, such as how to express themselves as sexual beings; whether or not to have sexual relationships, how, when and with whom. My analysis of sexual agency of youth draws upon Sherry Ortner's concept of "cultural projects" and "gender games" (1996, 2006) based on a feminist approach to practice theory, as well as contributions of Holly Wardlow (2006) regarding the analysis of different types of gender agency. Ortner and Warldlow contribute to the understanding of women's agency in their own terms in a social order characterized by a masculine hegemony. I use the notion of "gender games" to analyze dynamics of reproduction, re-creation, and transgression of gender norms of female sexual agency that are present in the daily life of youth and in their interactions with their peers. Ortner (1996; 2006) defines "gender games" as "serious games" or a cultural formation or model of practice, which captures the complex relationships between agents' subjectivities and practices, and structural constraints of society and culture. From this perspective, "social life is seen as something that is actively played, oriented toward culturally constituted goals and projects, and involving both routine practices and intentionalized action." (Ortner 2006: 129). The idea of a "serious game" intends to solve two problems presented by the practice theory from a feminist, minority and subaltern perspective. First, the serious game perspective, proposes a focus in more complex dimensions of the subjectivity of social actors, particularly intentionality and the cultural construction of agency. At the same time, it sorts out the tension between the intentional subject and voluntarism. It takes the game as the methodological unity of the practice, taking into account the mutual determinations of agents and structures. "Players are agents, skilled and intense strategizers who constantly stretch the game even as they enact it, and the simultaneous fact that players

are defined and constructed (though never wholly contained) by the game" (Ortner 1996:20). Second, the "game" incorporates both power struggles and change within a theoretical framework of the practice. It suggests reframing the notion of structure (without leaving it out completely), recognizing its incompletely hegemonic character and the multiplicity of games given in a particular time and across time (Ortner 1996).

In analyzing sexuality as a site of agency, I include sexual practices and broader gender games and projects articulated in the field of sexuality, such as those related with social reputation (Hirsch et. al. 2007) and future partners. I will take into account the three dimensions discussed by Ortner (2006): intentionality, cultural logics and power. Agency is defined as a capacity for forming intentions and acting to pursue them. It is culturally constructed, since subjects' intentions, goals, projects and courses of action are culturally shaped, and embedded in social relations, including power and inequality relations (Ortner 2006). This research explores different forms of youth sexual agency within their social and cultural contexts, and discusses the complexities of approaching agency in situations of high vulnerability. In this way, this research follows anthropological studies which lends their attention to the agency of young people and understand it in their own terms and contexts (e.g., Stephens 1995; Sharp 1995, 2002; Durham 2004; Bucholtz 2002). A relevant reference to study agency of girls in Ayacucho in their complexity and diversity is the work of Wardlow (2006). In her analysis of Huli women (New Guinea), this anthropologist distinguishes among "proper agency," "negative agency," and "positive agency." Proper agency is related to the cooperation with the reproduction of existent social structures. Negative agency and positive agency correspond to actions oriented to, respectively, the disruption or change of social structures. In the first case, the use of one's own resources of

power is oriented to resistance or refusal to collaborate, and in the second one, to shape new forms of social relationships. These distinctions among different "types of agency" relate women's courses of action to their positions regarding reproduction or change of social structures of power, and acknowledge women's cultural logic expressed through their specific strategies. In this study, I identify and analyze different types of sexual agency among girls in Ayacucho. These reproduce or challenge local structures of gender, but do so from different cultural logics than either the ones that support their parents and teachers' discourse about the "decent women" or the NGO discourse of sexual rights. In the analysis of sexual agency reproducing hegemonic structures of gender is particularly important studying the effects of power in these types of agency, and the double character of culture as enabling and constraining/disabling (Ortner 2006).

Sexual Rights and Citizenship of Youth in a Highly Unequal Context

Youth who were informants for this study participated in a feminist NGO project aimed at promoting sexual and reproductive health and the rights of poor youth. It was based on the active participation of these youth in the design and implementation of this project as part of a training and empowerment process as sexual citizens. This study is not an evaluation of this program but offers insights about the limited impact of a sexual rights project in the life of low-income youth who face different forms of social inequity.

Relying on the concept of embodiment as lived experience (Csordas 1994), I explore sexuality and citizenship of youth as embodied experiences and inseparable subjective and material realities. The body is conceptualized as a site of subjective experience, social control, political resistance, articulation and identity (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987; Lock and

Kaufert 1998). I will also build on Ong's (1995, 2004) approach to flexible citizenship as a changing experience involving complex dynamics of negotiation and learning. Taking into account these approaches, I explore ethnographically the ways in which Ayacuchano youth experience sexual rights and citizenship in the specific cultural, social and historical context in which they live their sexualities.

At the same time, this study includes a self-critical view of both the possibilities and the limits of citizenship and sexual rights as devices for emancipation and social justice. We cannot dismiss that, as suggested by Correa, Parker and Petchesky (2008), citizenship and human rights are forms of inclusion in the liberal state on liberal terms. Although the meanings of both citizenship and human rights are in constant political struggle, liberal views of both terms predominate in liberal democracies, such as in the Peruvian democracy. An important limitation of the liberal notion of citizenship is that it implies a series of exclusions, as it draws boundaries between those who are defined as citizens and those who are not, and between public and private spheres (Weeks 1998). A limitation of a liberal approach to human rights is the assumption of an individual is autonomy to exercise rights, which dismisses that "individual persons are always socially defined and connected" (Correa et. al. 2008: 210). Shortcomings of this approach are even more evident in the case of people at the bottom of social hierarchies and as excluded populations. Likewise, a liberal view of human rights offers a unitary narrative, when the meanings of rights are variable in different historical, social and cultural contexts for any particular groups (Op. cit.). This critical view of citizenship and human rights discourses and practices is particularly relevant for analyzing the limitations of the sexual rights and empowerment project in which low-income youth participated in Ayacucho.

Study Design and Research Methods

This is an ethnographic study focused on the everyday life of low-income youth living in Ayacucho, who participated, with diverse forms of involvement, in a sexual rights project. Activities of this project were opportunities to meet youth but the project is not the focus of my analysis in this text. That said, I mention the project often as part of the contexts in which youth think and speak about sexuality and gender.

Ethnography offers unique advantages to examine, in all their complexity and specificity, the interactions between social (e.g. gender structures of inequity) and cultural (e.g. classifications of sexual value) structures and the construction and enactment of young people's sexuality, sexual agency and sexual citizenship. Furthermore, ethnography is useful for to revealing the linkages between local and transnational cultures and social structures of inequity and hierarchy in concrete places, practices and meanings (Abu-Lughod 1991), or how the local and the global are mutually constituted (Burawoy 2000). Moreover, repeated and extended contact with informants, particularly through participant-observation, facilitated the rapport and trust necessary to explore sensitive issues, such as those related to young people's sexual activity.

My fieldwork lasted 18 months, from July 2008 to January 2010. During the first 12 months it coincided with the last period of the implementation of the three-year project where low-income youth in Ayacucho participated. I used diverse ethnographic methods in a complementary way, such as ethnographic mapping, participant observation, life-history interviews and key informant interviews. Field sites for ethnographic research were defined according to the places where the participatory project was implemented, including neighborhoods, schools, and health care services. In addition to these places, I followed

young people's activities beyond the sexual rights project, into the school, the labor market, places of entertainment, the streets and other hang out spots for youth. Paraphrasing Marcus (1998), the field was re-constructed by "following the people" and "following relations and articulations" at the interpersonal and institutional-level. Ethnography allows me to reconstruct a sort of topography or geography of sexual vulnerability of youth.

I conducted participant-observation in public places where youth interact, such as streets around educational institutions and the downtown, bars, discos, parties organized by schools or students to collect funds, picnics, fairs and other activities during religious and local fests. Likewise, I did participant-observation inside schools, health care services, workplaces (markets, shops, restaurants, and bus transportation) and family homes where I could be present during birthdays, interviews and other occasions. In addition, I conducted participant observation of organizational meetings, informational campaigns, educational sessions, rehearsals for a play, comparsas for the carnival, typical-dance contests, and other quotidian activities organized by the project. During the context of participant-observation I had several informal conversations about issues that did not arise during the interviews because shame or fear, such as situations of sexual abuse, and the participation of youth in the illegal market of coca and cocaine production. Participant observation allowed me to go beyond religious or NGO discourses and examine specific and contextualized practices through which discourses about young people's sexuality, citizenship and sexual rights are enacted, contested and negotiated by youth. Participant-observation provided insights about social configuration of physical and social spaces relevant to youth, structures of power and inequality taken for granted, gender and sexual dynamics, implicit norms, contrasts between social norms and practices, among other aspects important for this research.

I conducted 40 in-depth interviews with youth, 20 girls and 20 boys. In addition, I did 20 key-informant interviews with youth and adults from neighborhoods and schools, such as youth leaders of peer-groups and teachers, and with key-informants related to the sexual health of youth in the city of Ayacucho, such as health care providers, members of NGOs and responsible for the activities of the project and the responsible of the Ombudsmen Office for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (DEMUNA).

The interviews with youth were conducted in two or three sessions in Spanish, which is the official language of Peru, the language spoken by youth in the areas where I undertook this research, and my native tongue. Before the selection of the cases, I conducted participant observation of the activities of the project and reviewed socio-demographic information about participants. In the selection of the cases I took into account the internal differences among youth participating in the project, which was related to their participation in the sexual and reproductive project (e.g. peer educator or attendant to any educational or communicational activity of the project), gender, place of residence (a clear socioeconomic indicator), labor activity and the number of children they have. I included youth that represent critical cases and those which are particularly rich or enlightening for the study (Kuzel 1992), such as youth who were leaders within the project, or conversely, youth which a marginal participation or marginalized by other youth in the project. In this sense, the cases selected are representative of the diversity of youth who participated in the sexual rights project. These youth came from all the public schools in the districts of the city of Ayacucho where the project was implemented. Participants of the project were very diverse and the variable criteria for selecting youth advocates contributed to this. The NGO staff, teachers and the youth themselves followed different criteria for convening youth to training sessions and

selecting them as advocates. At the beginning, the NGO depended more on the teachers to convene youth to the workshops and most of these teachers selected them according to their criteria. Among the teachers there were two common criteria. One was to choose those students considered “a problem” with the aim of finding a way to “correct” or “calm” these youth through the NGO activities. The other was to choose youth with leadership positions among their peers or with remarkable abilities for public speaking. At another time, the NGO convened youth through recreational or educational activities organized by the first youth advocates in their schools and neighborhoods. In this case, youth who attended the workshops were very diverse and included mainly boys and girls from social networks of the first group of youth advocates. They also included the youth who felt motivated by any of the activities (fairs, fests, dance contests, workshops and video-forums), which were very successful among youth in Ayacucho because of the novelty of the themes and the playfulness of the methodologies used. The socio-demographic characteristics of my informants are described in table 1 (p.20).

In-depth interviews allowed me to study sexuality and sexual agency of youth within the context of youth ongoing life and exploring their subjective experiences of inequity and discrimination. Likewise, these interviews offered important advantages to explore how young people relate or not their embodied and intimate sexual experiences and sexual beings with the sexual-rights approaches learnt in the project. Furthermore, in-depth interviews contribute to revealing underlying youth concerns, struggles and logics from which they assumed, transform or challenge discourses about their sexuality, and make meaningful their sexual practices. Moreover, in-deep interviews help me to connect youth biographies and historical local and transnational events related with young people’s lives.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Young Informants

Characteristics	Advocates and Peer Educators in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (30)	Attendants of Workshops about Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (10)
Geographical provenance	Rural migrant: 5 Rural migrant children: 22 Rural migrant grandchildren: 3	Rural migrant : 2 Rural migrant children: 6 Rural migrant grandchildren: 2
Gender	Boys: 15 Girls: 15	Boys: 5 Girls: 5
Age	14 youth 15 to 16 years-old 16 youth 17 to19 years- old	4 youth 15 to16 years-old 6 youth 17 to19 years- old
Number of children	Boys: any boy had children Girls: 3 girls had children and one girl was pregnant	Boys: any boy had children Girls: 1 girl had children
Education	Secondary school -incomplete: 19 Secondary school-complete: 6 Higher education-incomplete: 5	Secondary school -incomplete: 6 Secondary school-complete: 3 Higher education-incomplete: 1
Occupation of the father or stepfather	Market and street vendor: 2 Cleaner, deliverer, driver, watchman, repairman: 13 Construction worker: 5 Artisan: 1 Farmer: 5 Agricultural technician: 1	Market and street vendor: 1 Cleaner, deliverer, watchman, bus collector, driver, car washer: 3 Construction worker: 1 Artisan: 1 Farmer: 2 Clerk: 1
Occupation of the mother * Most of these women also realized temporal activities in the labor market.	Housewife*: 16 Market and street vendor: 4 Preparation and delivery of meals for workers: 3 Owner of small grocery or store in their house: 4 Restaurant attendant: 1 Farmer: 1 Teacher: 1	Housewife*: 5 Market and street vendor: 1 Preparation and delivery of meals for workers: 1 Owner of small grocery or store in their house: 1 Cleaner: 1 Artisan:1
Occupation of the boys in the labor market (most are temporal jobs)	Bus collectors: 3 Construction worker: 3 Agricultural worker: 5 Graphic designer: 1 Artisan: 1	Moto-taxis conductors: 2 Construction worker: 1 Agricultural worker: 2
Occupation of the girls in the labor market (most are temporal jobs)	Store attendant: 2 Door-to-door vendor: 3 Making photocopies: 1 Cleaner, kitchen helper, hostel attendant: 4 Domestic worker: 3 Agricultural worker: 2	Market and street vendor: 1 Store attendant:1 Cleaner, kitchen helper, hostal attendant: 1 Domestic worker: 2

I conducted two to four interviews in each case, depending on the time youth felt comfortable talking in each interview. Considering in-deep interviews as a collaborative enterprise (Langness and Frank 1981), I was particularly alert to youth themes of interest and the ways in which they related them to their own unique history. I was also aware of framing the themes of my study in ways that were more meaningful for youth. I did the first interview of a series of three-four interviews, using an unstructured interview. In the following sessions, I combined open and more direct questions in a semi-structured interview to explore some of the themes related to the topics of this research and their life stories that youth raised in the first interview. The open-ended character of unstructured interview facilitated that youth could express their concerns and priorities, and framed and worded them in their own terms (Schensul, 1999). Furthermore, it enabled me to learn how youth think and conceptualize their lives (Langness and Frank 1981). Additionally, this kind of interview allowed me to explore new themes or nuances that are not addressed in public discourse regarding the project in which youth participated or sensitive issues. Topics for these interviews included: young people's daily activities; their experiences and relationships in their home, school, labor market and entertainment places with a special focus on conflictive and rewarding experiences, and forms of vulnerability and support; narratives about gender, sexuality and other social divisions in these places; their forms of social membership and social networks; their travel experiences; their experiences and meanings about love, sexuality, and relationships with adults and other youth; their experiences, motivations and views about their participation in the sexual rights project; and their experiences and self-representations as youth and sexual citizens, bearers of sexual rights. I explored processes and perceived changes in different moments of youth life attending to the fluidity of their experience.

Reflexivity about my social position in the field was permanent and significantly enriched my approach to generational gaps and social hierarchies and inequalities in urban Ayacucho. During the first six months of my fieldwork my access to the everyday life of youth was limited to their activities in the NGO project and the school, meaning the activities approved by their parents and teachers. Some youth confessed to me both their curiosity and mistrust because I was a "Limeña" (from Lima, the Peruvian Capital). Others thought I was probably Japanese[3]. They believed that I was someone who could make them think more about their life, but who had not faced the hardships of living in poor zones of Ayacucho and that I might judge them with prejudice as culturally inferior or potential "terrorists" (stigma that youth experienced because the Shining Path emerged in Ayacucho). "What had you thought about us?" was a common way to start talking about hidden activities for adults or foreigners, such as those related to drinking alcohol, or the participation in coca and cocaine production during school holidays. Most of the girls were wary of the possibility that their parents or teachers could discover their alcohol consumption, believing that I could behave like other adults who warned their parents about these situations. Boys were especially wary of talking about illegal or informal activities in the labor market because they feared having a bad image or that I would tell on them. Furthermore, youth saw me at the beginning as a potential NGO-person because of my professional training, and were careful to not share with me narratives or attitudes that were contrary to the narrative promoted by the NGO about sexual rights and gender equity.

[3] Although I introduced myself as a Peruvian student, some youth identify me as Japanese because my Chinese background expressed in my physical traits. After the government of Fujimori (1990-2000), a Peruvian -Japanese president, Peruvian people who were not familiarized with Asian descendants associate them with Japan. The presence of Asian descendants in Ayacucho is scarce and some people identify us as foreigners. This is very different in Lima and other departments on the Peruvian north coast, where Chinese and Japanese descendants are more numerous and are largely integrated into the economic, social and political life.

After the first six months in the field, my relationship with the girls started to change as they were more confident regarding my intentions of living in Ayacucho and sharing their everyday activities with them. Hanging out with them, going to the fairs and dancing with them without critiquing or acting surprised about what I saw or heard (such as girls' flirting with boys, their jokes and language) were forms of gaining their confidence. The difference of age became more relative as most of the youth started to see me not as their mother or teacher, or as the NGO advisor. Although I was old enough to be their mother or teacher, they pointed out that I was not "like them" because I looked younger than their mothers and I had a different attitude about behaviors or language that parents or teachers usually critique or prohibit. Some girls started to ask me for advice or told me their secrets, and invited me to their birthday parties and to hang out with them. My new relationship with girls enriched my interviews with them and the girls even "corrected" some of the information provided in previous interviews. Some situations narrated during the first interview were revisited. Two girls told me that they were not really "virgins" and explained their concerns regarding telling me that. One girl told me that she did not use contraception all the time as she stated before, and narrated the circumstances in which she had an abortion, and explained to me how this situation changed her relationship with her boyfriend. Likewise, several girls did not tell me initially about their continued visits to the bars and their consumption of alcohol, although some of them had referred to it earlier in the third person.

In the case of the boys, I could have a closer relationship with the boys who had a close relationship with girls, either as friends or boyfriends. However, I could not access places defined as masculine (such as some bars where there were only or mainly men) or participate in conversations between only boys. After discussing this limitation with my

sponsor, I decided to focus on girls' experiences and points of views and take into account a relational approach to gender. Thus, this research offers a deeper view of the logic and emotions involved in girls' perspectives and experiences. Being of the same gender facilitated a safer feeling for girls and they could talk more openly about fears, boys they like, feelings, and sexual experiences. Although, when possible, I have also considered voices from male teenagers, their worries, and the ways they interact among themselves and with the girls. In the cases of both genders, my analysis takes into account that constructions of gender are relational and, following Connell (1987), I explored gender constructions not as unique, homogenous or coherent.

Ethical aspects

This research project has been approved by both the Columbia University Institutional Review Board and the Peruvian University of Cayetano Heredia (UPCH) Review Board. Participation in the study was on a voluntary basis and all the participants received an informant consent form where they were carefully informed about the purposes of the study, the voluntary character of their participation and their right to abstain or withdraw from the study. I explained to youth that their decision of not participating in the study will not affect in any way their continuity in the NGO project or put at risk the benefits and rights they had in this project or in any institution they attended, such as schools or health services. The content of the informant consent form and the rights of the research participants were explained and discussed in detail separately with youth and the NGO responsible for the project where they participated.

Available research about gender and sexuality in Peru strongly support requesting parental consent for studies about sexuality and sexual health is not always a reasonable requirement to protect the subjects, particularly in the case of female youth. These studies show that parental norms forbidding sexual relationships of youth shape girls' higher vulnerability to sexual risks Perez et al. 2003) and limit the adoption of preventive sexual practices of both adolescent women and men (Quintana and Vasquez 1999; Quintana et al. 2003; Palomino et. al. 2003; Perez et al. 2003). Following IRB recommendations, parental consent was requested only for minors (children under 18 years old in Peru) for whom it was not distressful or potentially harmful. There were only two minors, one girl and one boy, for whom parental consent was not distressful or potentially harmful. Their parents were exceptionally supportive regarding open sexual education of their children and their children were confident about their parents' support regarding their views and behavior related to sexual issues. In most of the cases, when parental consent was not requested, personnel of the NGO in charge of the project signed the assent form as witness of the informed and voluntary basis of the oral assent provided by minors. Youth of 18 years of age (legal age of adulthood in Peru) and older youth expressed oral consent.

To guarantee confidentiality, personal and identifying information of research participants was stored in a locked file separate from field notes and audio files. Each person has a code, and I used codes to take notes about sensitive information, such as having sexual relations, participating in illegal activities in the market, or drinking alcohol. Using pseudonyms instead of the names of the participants is not enough to protect the identities of the youth interviewed since the sexual rights project where these youth participated was the only one in the districts of Ayacucho, Peru, where I conducted the study. For that reason I

decided not to mention the name of the districts where the research was done and only mention “the city of Ayacucho” or “the selected districts of Ayacucho” when necessary. I depicted the characteristics of the urban district in Ayacucho where I did the study because of the need to identify the broader context of the neighborhoods in which informants live and grew up in order to understand historical and social particularities. However, since there are three districts with similar characteristics in the city of Ayacucho, not mentioning the name of a particular district is a strategy for maintaining informant confidentiality Likewise, I used a pseudonym for the NGO which was in charge of the sexual rights project and I call it the NGO Jóvenes Huamanguinas (JH) or simply “the NGO.” In addition, as there are not several NGOs working in sexual rights projects with youth, I changed some biographical details in each case, a tactic learned from Hirsh’s (2003) research with Mexican women. Besides, I changed the name of the schools where youth studied.

Managing confidentiality and seeking help in situations of sexual abuse posed extremely complex dilemmas for me. Sexual abuse was clearly one of the exceptional situations for which maintaining confidentiality endangered youth and violated their rights. Throughout the study I identified several cases of sexual abuse that had occurred in the past and two cases where sexual abuse by family members was a threat when I was in the field. Seeking help in these cases was a very complex and delicate challenge because youth did not want to speak with counselors of the local legal, health or educational services about the sexual abuse they suffered, and prohibited me from telling their parents and others about it. I will discuss these ethical dilemmas in Chapter 6 when I address sexual abuse.

Outline of the Chapters

The next chapter (Chapter 2) offers a description of the city of Ayacucho (commonly called "Huamanga city" by local population) with a particular focus on changes in the social organization of the urban space and the current forms of social inclusion and exclusion of youth living in peripheral neighborhoods of the city. This Chapter shows the paradoxical situation of "included-excluded" youth in Ayacucho city. On the one hand, it depicts how low-income youth in Ayacucho, most of whom are the children of rural migrants who fled poverty and political violence on their land, participated in historical processes of political democratization and social inclusion in Peru. On the other hand, I show that these youth are second-class citizens since the referred processes of democratization and inclusion maintained deep social cleavages and inequalities among city dwellers along the lines of ethnicity, geographical provenance, social class and gender. Chapter 3 introduces the diverse actors, institutions and processes influencing narratives about sexuality and sexual rights among youth in the city of Ayacucho. Particularly important is the Catholic Church and its hegemonic influence on institutions (e.g., school, family, churches) that actively intervene in young people's socialization in poor neighborhoods of Ayacucho city. The official Catholic discourse on youth sexuality promotes social hierarchies and inequalities of gender and age, which the aforementioned institutions reproduce through advice, norms and sanctions in the daily life of youth. . This religious discourse qualifies and hierarchizes girls according to their sexual practices and sexual agency. Other relevant social agents are the mass media, NGOs, and peer groups. I introduce these social agents focusing on their discourses about sexuality and their interactions with youth lives. Chapter 4 analyzes the process by which the official

Catholic discourse about gender and sexuality shape the lived experiences of girls. One important question I seek to answer is how the religious, moral discourse shapes the views and the experiences of youth in urban Ayacucho in a context where they contest religious ideology about sexuality. . In this chapter, I discuss how in the domain of sexuality, religion is a source of both constraining moral norms and hierarchies imposed on girls and a known and contested script they use strategically to get respect and maintain a good social position in moral hierarchies of value. Chapter 5 addresses girls' reflexive relationship with the Catholic moral hierarchy of sexual value and their alternative discourses and practices related to their sexuality and sexual agency. Throughout this chapter, I argue that these girls are skillful players of what could be called a game of "self-regulated transgressions" in which gender agency is exercised but in a self-regulated manner so as not to affect long-term goals. This form of agency does not follow a dichotomy of active resistance or passive accommodation to existing sexual and gender hierarchies. The forms of girls' agency examined in this chapter demonstrate the dynamic relationships among agents, their cultural logic, and the social structures that shape their resources and opportunities. Chapter 6 expands the analysis of Chapter 4 and 5 to study interactions between sexual and gender hierarchies and other social hierarchies organizing social relations and shaping forms of social inclusion and exclusion in Peru. Chapter 7 analyzes relationships between social and sexual vulnerability among low-income youth in the city of Ayacucho. The foci are situations of social vulnerability related to sexual abuse and sexual risks for youth in three significant spheres of their everyday life: at home, in the labor market and the places of entertainment and meetings among peers. Chapter 8 summarizes the ethnographic results of the central questions proposed in the first chapter, and then discusses its contributions to research about sexuality, social inequalities, and sexual

vulnerability. Likewise, this chapter offers reflections regarding the implications of this study for development projects and social policies addressing sexual and reproductive health and rights of youth in Peru and in other similar latitudes.

This study adds to conceptual, methodological and political debates about sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights of poor youth in situations where systems of inequalities and hierarchies significantly shape their social context. Conceptually, this research contributes to an understanding of sexuality as a domain of social structure where social inequalities and hierarchies are produced and signified (Rubin 1984; Connell and Dowsett 1992). A particular theme my ethnographic study illuminates is the production of social hierarchies among girls based on their sexual agency. Methodologically, this study shows the power of ethnography to understand particular ways in which sexuality and social inequalities interact in the everyday life of low-income youth. It also reveals the forms in which social inequalities and hierarchies are re-produced in the ambit of sexuality and in which they create sexual vulnerability. Likewise, my research contributes to understanding the cultural logics of youth about sexual risks and complex dimensions of their sexual and gender agency. In terms of policies and programs, this research offers insights about potentialities and limitations of sexual rights and empowerment interventions working with poor youth in unequal societies, complementing existing literature about structural interventions in HIV prevention (eg., Browning 2002; Diclemente and Wingood 2000; Fullilove et al. 2000; Klein et. al. 2000; Laumann and Youm 1999; Parker et. al. 1999, 2002; Paiva 1995).

CHAPTER 2: A NEW GENERATION IN A CHANGING CITY

The youth (15-19 years old) who participated in this study belong to low-income families living in peripheral districts of Ayacucho city and they grew up in a post-conflict society. Ayacucho city or "Huamanga,"[4] is the capital city of the Ayacucho Department, one of the poorest departments of Peru, located in the Sierra region (of the Andean zone). Poverty affects more than half of all households in the urban areas and nearly nine out of ten households in the rural areas in Ayacucho (Li 2009).[5] Most of the population of Ayacucho department has a Quechua origin and 64% has Quechua as their native tongue. Quechua was the official language of administration in the Incas' empire, but since the colonial period, indigenous groups and their culture have been subordinated and discriminated against in harsh or subtle forms.

Ayacucho is the department most harshly affected by the internal war between the PCP Sendero Luminoso (Peruvian Communist Party Shining Path) and the Peruvian State (1980-1999). The PCP Sendero Luminoso is a Maoist political faction, which initiated its armed actions in this region in May of 1980, and later was expanded to most of the Peruvian

[4] Huamanga is the old name of the capital city of Ayacucho, which is commonly used by the local population to denominate it. Huamanga is also the name of the Province to which Ayacucho city belongs.

[5] Poverty is measured through the National Household Questionnaire Survey (ENAHO), which defines the poverty line as a minimum expenditure deemed necessary for an individual in order to obtain all the goods and services that satisfy his or her basic needs. The poverty line is the aggregation of food expenditure that is calculated based on a minimum daily caloric intake, and non-food expenditure (INEI 2007).

territory.[6] This internal conflict diminished in intensity in 1992, a year when Abimael Guzmán, the major leader of Sendero Luminoso, was captured. The state of emergency in Ayacucho ended in 1999, and nowadays the violent actions of Sendero Luminoso are limited to the Apurimac and Ene River Valley (VRAE) zone, in the jungle of Ayacucho, where it acts in association with drug cartels. From a total amount of 70,000 victims at national level, an estimated 42.5% belong to this department. In addition to the economic destruction and the damage to community and state services was the loss of civil and political rights because of the state of emergency and the psychological and emotional damage to its population (Truth and Reconciliation Commission-Peru 2003, Volume VI, Cap. 1:15).

After the internal war ended in 1999, commercial and tourist activities have grown gradually in the city of Ayacucho, as well as a series of state and developmental projects aiming at the reconstruction of the Ayacuchan society after almost 20 years of political violence and economic destruction. As the anthropologist, Ludwig Huber (2002), pointed out, since the end of the war, consumption and the circulation of ideas and images linked to transnational markets and cultures have been clear signals of the impact of economic and cultural globalization in Ayacucho city (a process that started earlier in other coastal cities of the Peruvian country). At the same time, the coca and cocaine economy in the jungle of

[6]According to the Peruvian anthropologist, Carlos Ivan Degregori, one of the main scholars specializing on the Shining Path, this political organization emerged in university classrooms as a result of the meeting of a provincial university elite (not from Lima) with young people who came from Andean rural zones. These young people were from "sectors just without a place in the traditional rural society and who did not find one in the modern Peru either, suffocated by crisis and unemployment" (Degregori 2010: 144-145, my translation). Regarding the connections between the emergence of the Shining Path and the deep fractures in the Peruvian society, Degregori said: "Shining Path precisely emerged in those gaps, interstices, as a product of the mismatch produced between the capital and the provinces, between the city and the country (hinterland), between Andeans and Creoles: and it would represent the defensive and authoritarian reaction of a narrow strip situated in the most beaten and disarticulated pole by this specific development: provinces-the country-Andes" (Degregori 1988:8, my translation).

Ayacucho has been expanded after the end of the internal war. The expansion of narco-trafficking in this zone has become an important source of temporal employment for urban youth, and it is speculated that an important part of the current commercial dynamism in the city of Ayacucho is linked to money laundering as a result of drug trafficking (Novak et al. 2008).

A New Generation of "Huamanguinos"

The young boys and girls who participated in this study are part of an overwhelmingly new generation of capital residents of Ayacucho city whose origins are rural and Quechuas. Most of these teenagers are second-generation migrants; that is, their parents were born in other provinces of Ayacucho or in departments that border it, such as Huancavelica, Apurimac or Cuzco. Some parents migrated to escape from the political violence and others for economic and labor reasons. They settled down in San Juan Bautista district, Carmen Alto, or in the peripheral neighborhoods of Ayacucho district, and their children were born in these quarters. Some informants are rural migrants (migrants of first generation) or grandchildren of rural migrants (migrants of third generation). They were born between the years 1990 and 1993 and grew up when the worst moments of the internal war were over. The sons and grandsons of rural migrants born in the city of Ayacucho are now part of a generation[7] of new people from Huamanga or "huamanguinos." Although, there are differences of diverse order within the young people who participated in this study, there are social situations and cultural changes that as a generation they share and that makes them different from their parents, such as their views and practices regarding gender and sexuality, which frequently places them in

[7] According to Mannheim (1993), the notion of "generation's situation" refers to the point where the time and the social and historical conditions of existence are united (Zárzuri 2000).

conflictive situations with respect to their parents and others adults. These boys and girls are different than their parents in that they were born in the city and speak Spanish fluently, they have greater access to education provided by state policies and the sacrifice of their parents, but also by belong to a generation more connected to the information flux, images and expectations of the global capitalist world. Nonetheless, the technological innovations and the neoliberal economic regime did not necessarily give these youth greater connections with better employment opportunities, credit or incomes. Like their parents, most of them work in the informal sector and are underpaid.

Following the anthropologist Néstor García Canclini (2004), it is possible to think of these young people as "connected–disconnected" or "included-excluded" to account for contradictory forms of existence in a globalized world where forms of social disadvantage are articulated with forms of belonging, participation or ownership (García Canclini 2004:79). For instance, low-income youth in Ayacucho are excluded from high quality education as they can only access poor quality public education in their city. As happens in other Latin American countries (Bayón, 2008; Zicardi 2008), processes of social exclusion in Peru operate through the disadvantageous or subordinated forms in which certain social groups are included, such as the urban poor, indigenous people and women. In contrast to what happened with their parents, for low-income youth in Ayacucho, social disadvantages do not emerged from "being out" (out of the city or the formal education system), but from the ways in which social structures, state institutions and markets produce forms of "differentiated inclusion" (Bayón 2008: 217). This form of inclusion is what Amartya Sen has called "a disadvantageous inclusion" (Sen 2000), a pervasive engagement that generates a second-class citizenship (Roberts 2004) and makes the inequalities more evident in Latin America cities

(Ziccardi, 2008). This view can be described as a relational approach to social inequality, and moves beyond a sole focus on lack of resources or a dualistic view assuming that exclusion and inclusion are exclusionary.

In this chapter, I present relevant dimensions of the historical and social processes related with current forms of social inclusion, social exclusion, recognition and discrimination of youth living in peripheral neighborhoods of Ayacucho city. This is the larger frame where social inequalities and situations of sexual vulnerability they face, are embedded, as well as their forms of agency. Current social position of youth and their forms of connection and disconnection with local and transnational networks of power, prestige and resources, are articulated with both changes that happened in the city of Ayacucho during the last decades and old forms of social exclusion that have been maintained or reconfigurated. These changes, linked with processes of a different order, are seen in-depth as follows. First, I note the social reconfiguration of the Ayacucho city, identifying different dynamics that intervened along its history. Second, I describe the ways of inclusion and exclusion related to the massive access to secondary and higher levels of education, as well with job opportunities. Third, I call attention to the increased presence of the State and NGOs in the area during the post-conflict period, and specially their discourses about rights, citizenship and democratization. Forth, I analyze the access of youth to media and consumer culture in post-conflict Ayacucho. I will then go on to analyze the process of cultural changes in the next chapter; these kinds of changes have a relation with the time of an acceleration of the flux of images and reduction of distances produced by the economic and cultural globalization.

From a Seigniorial City to One of Sons and Daughters of Rural Migrants

One of the consequences of the internal armed conflict was the growth and change of the social configuration of Ayacucho City (Huamanga) and the formation of new peripheral neighborhoods where rural migrants and their descendants settled down, such as those situated in the districts where my informants live.

Four districts form the city of Ayacucho: Ayacucho, San Juan Bautista, Carmen Alto and Jesus Nazareno. The historic and administrative center of the department is situated in the district of Ayacucho. The other districts are placed at a relatively short distance from the center—20 to 30 minutes walking distance and 10 to 20 minutes using public transport (by moto-taxis). The oldest district in the area is Ayacucho, since their historical roots are in the Spanish foundation of the city in the year 1539. It is also called "historic center" because in it are situated the Colonial Churches (temples) and big colonial houses, which also come from that time. The big houses are not occupied as they used to be by seigniorial families, but instead in their surroundings reside in mainly the oldest families from Huamanga, those with more economic sources. Here, are concentrated the main institutions of highest education level and the head offices of public or private institutions that operate not only in Huamanga province, but in the entire Ayacucho department. In other words, the available "social mobility sources" of the department are concentrated in the district of Ayacucho (Durand 2005). In addition, here are located the main shops, where the products, goods and other symbols of economic modernization and the cultural globalization are displayed. The others districts, San Juan Bautista, Carmen Alto and Jesus Nazareno, were recognized as such, only until the twenty century: Carmen Alto during 1920, San Juan Bautista in 1960, and Jesus

Nazareno in the year 2002. Carmen Alto and San Juan Bautista have their origins in the colonial times. Jesus Nazareno is the newest district and was separated from Ayacucho district just in the present decade. These districts, where most slums and recent human settlements are situated, have historically lacked (some even until now) basic services of water, urban drainage system, electricity and street lighting, roads and security.

Some have argued that the physical and social division of Huamanga city has had little variation along its history (González et al. 1995; Strocka 2008) because the so-called historic center or colonial town center continues to be the place of residence for people with more economic resources (Strocka 2008), the residence of white and *mestizo*[8] people, and the physical instantiation of the political, economic and religious power (González Carré et al. 1995: 27-28). Strocka says the distance from the center to the city is an indicator of prestige and the socioeconomic standing of the families. Notwithstanding, along the history of the city, especially during the last decades of the 20thCentury, a series of demographic and social changes took place that add to the complexity and ambiguity in the division between the center and the peripheral neighborhoods. A socio-physical geography, where social divisions and ways of power map onto places of residence, was maintained, but in the last years this social topography has been much more diversified and articulated. Physical and social frontiers, which are not sharply defined any more, have generated new expressions of distrust, surprise, annoyance, or discrimination, as I will show below. To note the changes and continuities in the city where the young people who participated in my study live, the

[8] *Mestizo* is a term coined in the colonial period to name people of racially mixed ancestry, especially, Peruvian Indian and Spanish. The term is also currently used to denominate a person who is considered culturally mixed, particularly a migrant from rural areas who is living in the city.

following section provides a brief look at the formation of the living quarters of the Ayacucho capital.

The Organization of the City and the Colonial Order

The districts San Juan Bautista and Carmen Alto are located in the indigenous living quarters and *mestizo* neighborhoods that were formed during the colonial period. During the colonial period, the spatial organization of the city reproduced the legal, social and ideological division intended to create a Spanish republic and another republic for indigenous people (Peruvian *indios*). The center was the original urban nucleus of the city, where the Spanish neighborhoods where located, including the founders of the city and those in possession of political and economic power (Zapata et al. 2008), as well as their descendants, relatives and servants. Conversely, the adjacent quarters that surrounded this center were mostly not considered in the foundational planning of the city. The residents of these neighborhoods were indigenous people who had been brought as *yanaconas*[9] or servants removed from their ancestral communities, from the rural zones for employment in construction and the services industry in the city. Other residents included indigenous people who had escaped from the rural zones,[10] *mestizos* who became numerous as well as some Spanish people (González Carré et al. 1995: 27-28).

[9] During the Inca Empire, yanaconas where ethnic outsiders who left the ayllu (enlarged community in a given territory) system and worked full-time at a variety of tasks for the Inca, the Coya (Inca queen), or the religious establishment, in a relationship of service to the state. A few members of this serving class enjoyed high social status and were appointed as local authoritoes or curacas by the Inca. They could own property and sometimes had their own farms. After the Spaniard conquest, yanaconas became in a synonymous of outsiders servants of the Spaniards, who were removed physically and structurally from their ancestor communities (Stern 1982; Wightman 1990).

[10] The natives escaped from their rural communities to avoid the Indian's tribute (tax) and the mining *mita*, a working form of forced tax which was so hard and made in such inhuman conditions that

In the seventeenth century, one century after the foundation of Huamanga city, there was an increase of indigenous and mestizos artisans and merchants. They were descendants from indigenous people who came as *yanaconas*, and had learned different jobs that met the demand of goods and services of the city. This group, in the practice, burst into the city with activities on their own and formed or reconfigured the colonial quarters registered since the end of sixteenth century: Santa Ana, Magdalena, Carmen Alto, San Juan Bautista, San Blas and Tenería among others (González et al., 1995). In these places, people had the same job and a common ethnic and historical identity. Thus, for example, the quarter of Carmen Alto, neighboring San Juan Bautista, was specialized in textile production and was the residence of mule drivers, who had a fundamental role in the trade between the urban and the rural zones. The quarters of San Juan Bautista and Teneria were dedicated to tannery, cattle trade, and selling meat (Urrutia 1985).

Peru's declaration of independence from Spain in 1821 did not bring significant changes to the social order established during the colonial times. The creoles, descendants of Spaniards, had the political and economic power along with the social and cultural prestige. On the other hand, the indigenous people were despised and discriminated, even more, after a brief period, the indigenous tribute was reestablished. Nevertheless, a series of changes, already initiated in colonial times took place, such as the crises in the mines, estates (*haciendas*), and textile production *(obrajes),*which diminished the material base of power from the seigniorial families, descendants of the Spanish (Zapata etal.2008).

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caused the death of many aborigines. The indigenous people, who came from different local ethnic groups, formed quarters in the slopes and hills which surrounded the urban nucleus and formed the base of the artisanal sector of the city (Zapata et al. 2008).

At the beginning of the Republic, the *mestizo* group of artisans and merchants or small businessmen acquired a particular importance in the economical and organizational dynamic of the city. They unified in the 19th century, a period when trade unions and associations had prominence and visibility (Gonzáles 1999). During the nineteenth century, the residents of San Juan Bautista and Carmen Alto quarters were mostly *mestizo* artisans and merchants. They become a group with some economic power who improved the regional economy until beginning of the twentieth century. On the other hand, landowners and indigenous political chiefs called *caciques* were affected in their economic power as result of a gradual fragmentation of the haciendas by bequeathing the land in inheritance or selling the property and as consequence of the war for independence. Nevertheless, these *mestizos* maintained their position in their original quarters and did not move to the urban center, which continue representing the concentration of social and political power (Gonzáles 1999: 161). What appears to be a contradiction between economic power and social position of the *mestizos* is related to the continuity of the social stratification that originated in colonial times, which maintained a racial, ethnic, and spatial division and hierarchy between the Spanish and the Andean. This form of social organization that maintained a clear separation between the seigniorial families from the center of the city and the *mestizos* from the quarters, persisted until the 1960 years, when a series of changes were given at regional and national level, which to some degree broke the colonial order inherited and maintained by an oligarchic society during the republic. The historians González, Gutierrez and Urrutia describe with clarity the separation observed in Huamanga city:

> Since the first moments until the decade of the sixties of this century existed a clear difference between the members of the seigniorial sector who lived in the historic center of the city, and the sectors of mestizos who lived in the quarters. A member of

> an old seigniorial family never was a resident of one quarter, and one indio or mestizo, did not build his house in the central zone of Huamanga. In the city, there was a clear difference and a precise location of the social and cultural sectors that integrated it. […] The artisans fixed images, candles, or andas, and handbarrows; they knitted blankets or fixed and mended something broken in the signors houses. When finished the work, they returned to their neighborhood (quarter) until a new demand made them come back" (González et al. 1995: 184-185, my translation)

It is possible until nowadays to observe continuity in the economic activities and the celebration of religious festivities (patron saint's day celebration) in the quarters that emerged during colonial times. Thus, for example, in present days in San Juan Bautista district, there are some artisans working in tannery (*curtiembre*), who until these days continue celebrating their patron saint's fiesta in August. Also, there is until now, a group of livestock merchants who are residents of the district and participate in the Sunday fair for cattle sale at *Cuchomolino* fairground. However, these activities are not the only ones in the district or the most important either, as they used to be. Peripheral neighborhoods have developed considerably and become much more socially, economically and culturally, diverse, as we will see next.

Human Settlements and New Towns Setting-Up

Since the second half of the twentieth century, different changes in Peru and Ayacucho department took place that modified the social and politic panorama of the city of Huamanga. At national level, the crisis of oligarchic domination had its final stageduring the government of General Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968-1975).[11] In Ayacucho, besides these changes, of

[11] The crisis of the oligarchy is a result of a long social process characterized by the peasant's mobilizations and the breakdown of the traditional rural order, the accelerated process of urbanization, the *haciendas* crisis, and the economic modernization which ultimately led to the preponderance of the industrial urban pole of the economy (Pease 1977).

particular importance was the reopening of the National University San Cristobal of Huamanga (UNSCH) in 1959, as well as the armed conflict between the Shining Path-Communist Party of Peru and the Peruvian State that started in the year 1980.

From the 1950-1980, the massive migrations from the mountain (*sierra*), the rural zones, to urban zones especially to Lima and other cities on the Coast were part of the processes that accompanied the described changes. Particularly the migrations that occurred in the 1980s, as consequence of the politic violence in the rural zones of Ayacucho, had produced a population growth in Ayacucho City and the multiplication of human settlements on the periphery, occupied by rural migrants. The massive presence of these rural migrants was transforming the social and physical geography of Ayacucho City, the social composition of the city dwellers, and the symbolic representations of the Ayacucho city among its inhabitants. The center became progressively smaller, and the neighboring districts grew and became physical and socially more diverse. These were no longer the quarters of *mestizo* artisans and merchants, but districts surrounded by human settlements inhabited mostly by a migrant population of rural origin (Caballero et al. 1995).

The population growth of Ayacucho City between the years 1970 and 1980 has been constant, maintaining an average increase of 4,000 persons per year (Caballero et al. 1995: 21). The migratory flow towards the Ayacucho city is associated with poverty and the social exclusion of the rural areas, as well with the so called “myth of progress,” according to which the peasants associate the progress of their children and family with the high level education, which is available in the cities (see Degregori 1986). Many of these migrants, who were looking for a better economic situation, established themselves temporarily in the New Towns (shantytowns) that have formed during this decade surrounding the oldest quarters,

neighborhoods, of Ayacucho (Caballero et al. 1995: 21). Besides, the reopening of the National University of San Cristobal of Huamanga (UNSCH) in 1959 significantly contributed to the increase of the young population in Ayacucho city[12] and revitalized the ideological and politic debate about social change, power relations and exploitation of the indigenous population and the poor (Gamarra 2010). In addition, the local economy was more dynamic because students, professors and administrative personnel demanded a series of services as hotels, restaurants, shops, transportation and entertainment places (Zapata et al. 2008: 164-165). The anthropologist Carlos Ivan Degregori described the importance of the public university (UNSCH) in the 60s in this way :

> Ayacucho, or more precisely, the northern provinces of the department, show as an unusual characteristic, the spearhead of the modernity was not really any industrial or mining company, but rather an institution theoretically academic: the university, which since 1959 became the dynamic focal point that we could call integral, since its influence ranged from the economy to ideology. (Degregori 1988:24, my translation)

Moreover, the political violence of Shining Path and the Peruvian State, which had devastated entire communities and destroyed their livelihood, expelled the rural population and those from the urban centers of the more affected provinces toward the capital of Ayacucho department, accelerating with it the urbanization process of the department. Even though Ayacucho department expelled a portion of its population to other departments, at the same time, the city of Ayacucho ("Huamanga") the capital of the department, was the most important point of destination for displaced persons in the department and in the country as it

[12] The number of registered students in the UNSCH multiplied quickly, from 228 registered students in 1959 when it started the University, it increased to 6209 in 1978, Most of the students came from provinces of Ayacucho and from neighboring departments as Huancavelica, Apurimac, Junin, and Ica (Zapata et al. 2008:164).

was the nearest city where they could arrive and some of them had family networks there (Reynaga 1996).

In 1981, when the armed conflict started, Huamanga city had 69,533 inhabitants, and in 1993, one year after Abimael Guzmán (main leader of the subversive group Shinning Path) was captured, the population had grown to 105,918 persons. The migrants who arrived in the 80s to Ayacucho city, were mostly peasants expelled by political violence, who had to abandon their lands to escape from death and destruction that plunged their communities into mourning, running away from the menacing of the Shinning Path as well from the repression of the military forces (Degregori 1996). Many of them were married or cohabitating couples that arrived with their children and other members of their families and generally had low levels of formal education (Pando 2001). These migrants had the need to form new human settlements in the periphery of the city, including its surrounded slopes. Thus, in the decade of the 80s, an increased number of quarters were formed in Ayacucho city, mostly as a result of invasions, with precarious housing conditions and a lack of access to basic services (Caballero et al. 1995; Reynaga 1996). Reynaga registers the following evolution in the creation of new slums in Ayacucho's capital city:

> According to the Municipal Direction of Human Settlements and private institutions, until 1960 there were approximately 15 old slums—among them three of colonial origin—which functioned as communities [...]. Between 1960 and 1970, twelve new slums were formed and, from 1970 to 1980, another 15 slums were created. But since 1980, more than 60 slums were constituted. (Reynaga 1996: 13, my translation)

From this, specialists on migratory processes in Ayacucho affirm under, in light of these figures that is not appropriate to say that the political violence have increased the migratory flow considerably, but that it was already important to the capital of this

department. What it is possible to affirm is that the forced migration and the emergency situation of the displaced population shaped a type of rural migration, and contributed to an increase in poverty and social conflicts, demanding more services in the Ayacucho city (Caballero et al. 1995).

The presence of a large number of rural migrants in the city who brought their customs and kept dynamic links with their original communities, gave rise to processes of adaptation and cultural resignification, as well to everyday misunderstandings and ways of cultural discrimination from the natives of Ayacucho city. At the same time a peasant-like life (or what we might describe as "ruralization") was produced in the city of Ayacucho (Caballero et al. 1995; Reynaga 1996). Thus for instance, some collective forms of work and mutual help became popular, such as the *ayni* and the *minka*,[13] breeding small animals, farm animals, cooking with wood, and cooking typical meals from different rural zones of Ayacucho (Reynaga 1996: 50). Although the presence of rural migrants in the capital city of Ayacucho was not new (rural migration has gone on since 1950), the people displaced by political violence was so numerous that changed the face and customs in the city of Ayacucho. On the other hand, in the decade of the 80s, the seigniorial families had already lost the economic power they had in the city, and some of them had migrated to Lima and other cities of the Coast (Gonzalez et al. 1995: 186). Some members of these families also had liberal professions and worked as public officials (Gonzalez et al. 1995: 185), but they did not have the resources to have a life matching their expectations. Also, their political and social power

[13]*Ayni* and *minka* are work exchange systems practiced in indigenous communities in the Andes. Ayni implies that a member of a community help another member for private purposes when support is needed (e.g. agricultural work). Another time the family that got support will participate in other *ayni* work supporting the others. Participants are supplied with food and drink by the hosting family. *Minka* is collective or community work with a useful social purpose (Golte 1987).

was less easily accepted now by different social groups, and was questioned by the social reforms and ideology of recognition of the peasants' demands and rights promoted by the military government of Velazco Alvarado, the peasant riots and the university groups.

Post-Conflict Ayacucho

Nowadays, two decades after the subversive actions had diminished, the population of Ayacucho city has significantly increased, becoming one of the 20 cities most densely populated in Peru (INEI, 2007). Between 1993 and 2007, Ayacucho city went from having 105,918 thousand inhabitants to 151,019 inhabitants, experiencing a population growth of 42.6%, being one of the highest rates in population growth among the capital cities in Peru (INEI 2007).

As noticed by Huber (2002) in his interesting ethnography of Ayacucho city at the beginning of the present century, this "is not any more, the sleeping city from the fifties, or the major city paralyzed by the violence of the eighties" (p.39, my translation). Its commercial activity and the production of services have grown and diversified. Even though it is still one of the poorer departments of the country, it is possible appreciate new restaurants, cafes, small supermarkets, galleries where clothes are sold, hotels, taverns, bars, and discos, money exchange houses, transport companies, among other business that opened during the last decade. Some of the places in the center of the city look like those from the Main Square of downtown Lima or similar to some of Kennedy Park in Miraflores, (a middle class district of Lima) places in the capital of the country frequently visited by tourists. The people in Ayacucho and some researchers specializing in studying the drug economy (Novak et al. 2008) speculate about the origin of the money invested in these businesses, possibly

coming from drug cartels which have incremented their participation in the economy of Ayacucho in the last decades. What is clear is that these businesses have become sources of income and work for adults and young people, and as an indication of their expectations to consume. For example, the teenagers who participated in the study, used to not eat in the restaurants, coffee shops and buy in all kinds of shops that are now in these places, but some of them have acquaintances or families who work or have worked in these places, and all take constant walks around this zone looking at what is shown there, mainly clothes, accessories, cellular phones, and electric appliances. Also the arrival of popular singers and national musical groups sponsored by telephone companies, brewing companies or others, are signs that Ayacucho is now a city seen as commercially attractive.

The teenagers and young people who grew up in Ayacucho city in the 90s and mainly during the first decade of 2000 are more connected to transnational flows of information, images, persons and goods than those who where youth in the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Examples include the electronic products offered and demanded, the fashion and youth subcultures, and the massive access to Internet, as well. The young people interviewed were part of the first generation who had access to Internet massively in Ayacucho city, with the first public Internet cabins of low cost installed in 2000 (Huber 2002). Noticeably, in the last years this has increased in the periphery neighborhoods, around the schools and the university, becoming also a source of employment for young men and teenagers.

The relation between center and periphery of the city is far from that described during the colonial period, and in the beginning of the 20th century, everybody is not “in their place” contrary to expectations in a highly stratified society, as Ayacucho was decades ago. In present days, even when the division between center and the peripheral neighborhoods

continues, the divisions and frontiers are more permeable and ambiguous in many situations. Many of the Huamanga's families "of lineage" or with more economic resources who still lived in Huamanga left the city in the 1980s, a period of worsening political violence. In the center of the city there are mainly public institutions, private and state educational institutions, as well as those more prosperous businesses. Now, besides this, the sons of rural migrants differ from their parents because they are part of the daily social scene of the city's center and its surroundings, as users of some of the services and not only as informal workers or employees. The most noticeable is the massive presence of these young people in the streets of the center of Ayacucho city, particularly by the time of entrance or the time to leave of students from educational institutions, academies, technological institutions and the university.

The boys and girls who participated in this study, even if they live in one of the peripheral neighborhoods of the city, go daily to the center for many reasons: to study, for social activities, entertainment, work, or to do something at the request of their parents. Besides, the peripheral districts, in the past inhabited mainly by merchants and specialized artisans (e.g., production of leather shoes, ceramics, woven blankets, etc.), nowadays are more diverse about its social and occupational composition. Thus, the peripheral neighborhoods are no longer a place occupied mainly by small independent producers or cattle merchants, even when these still have a presence in the district. Most of the workers labor in the activities of commerce and services sector, and many do jobs out of the formal sector of the economy, as it I explain in detail later in this chapter.

Figure 3: Peripheral Neighborhoods in Ayacucho

Housing characteristics and access to basic services show the socioeconomic inequalities and processes of urbanization in the peripheral districts. The houses made out of reinforced concrete and with access to all the basic services, are located in the main avenues of the district, where streets are asphalted. This is where commercial small businesses such as hardware stores and others are concentrated. In other parts of the peripheral districts, mainly occupied by houses, there are some partially-built houses, with roof or doors made of corrugated iron, and the floor without asphalt. Bordering the district on the outskirts, are the human settlements (such as Los Olivos, Villa los Warpas, and Keiko Sofia) formed by populations who migrated from the rural zones and came mostly from the Apurimac River

and from the provinces of the center of the region, mainly from Vilcashuaman (Municipality of San Juan Bautista 2010). Following the dynamic of creation of popular neighborhoods and quarters in many cities of Peru, the families of the periphery quarters where my informants live, slowly obtained basic services, such as water, drainage, and electricity. Nonetheless, there are still 23% of houses without potable water, 21% without adequate sanitary senerage systems and 14% lacking electric services (Municipality of San Juan Bautista 2010).

Exceptionally, some houses stand out among the other houses that are partially constructed and with are particularly large, with carved wooden doors, finished with decorated blue tiles, or other details that mark their difference with the others. People from the quarters say, referring to those, that they are houses of "narcos" (a nick name of *narcotraficantes* or drug traffickers), but they did not know exactly and their descriptions suggested that they are really small time dealers, or persons linked to production of coca leaves to be sold to drug cartels, narco-traffickers, and to prepare the cocaine.

The major social and cultural diversity that is observed in the center of the city and the peripheral quarters have not brought recognition of cultural differences without hierarchizing them among the city dwellers of Ayacucho city. The predominant presence of migrants in Ayacucho city together with their experiences of discrimination or stigmatization have produced the distinction between persons from Ayacucho and persons from *Huamanga*, the old name of the capital of Ayacucho. Silva (2007) argues that the preference to call themselves as *Huamanguino* and not *Ayacuchano* is connected with the historic and social value of Huamanga. This last is associated to the religious architecture and the great houses that stem from the colonial times, which are considered cultural patrimony of the city and are part of its touristic attractions. On the other hand, Ayacucho is considered to be synonymous

with backwardness, and is associated with the terrorism (because the subversive group Shining Path emerged in Ayacucho).Thus, the social and physical geography established at the beginning of the colonial period, where only the Spaniards have quarters in the city, changed along the colonial period and after, during republican times, when *mestizos* and indigenous population made themselves a place, first in the surroundings, and then in the center of the city. Even more, nowadays, in a post-conflict time, consumerism and informational technology are apparently forms of democratization of aspirations and resources in Ayacucho, as in other cities in neoliberal Peru. However, the social and cultural stratification based of ethnicity and social class has continued until now. Likewise, as we will see below, economic exclusion of the formal sector remains for indigenous rural migrants and their descendants

Access to Formal Education and Forms of Discrimination in Educational Institutions

Except two boys of the 40 youth I interviewed who left school for economic reasons (one of them completed the secondary or high school and the other not), the others were studying at the time that I carried out the fieldwork of this study. Most of my informants (28) were attending secondary school (the equivalent of high school in the US), other teens had recently started their studies at a higher education institute (4) or university (3), or were studying in an academy preparing to enter college (3). Two of the three girls who were mothers continued studying after a short period of leaving school, and one of them abandoned school because she was pregnant, but planned to return after delivery.

The access to secondary and higher education of my informants is currently, not exceptional in Ayacucho city. According to the Peruvian census, in the second half of 20th

century there were advances with respect to the educational level achieved by the urban population of Ayacucho. In 1981, the 9.89% of the people had some level of higher education, in 1993 this figure grew to 17%, and in 2007 it was 26%, identical to the national average. The urban youth (15-19 years old), either men or women, have benefitted most with the progressive expansion of public education in Ayacucho (and in the rest of Peru), achieving higher educational levels than their parents and grandparents. According to the Census of 2007, 79% of the youth from 15 to 19 years old had completed secondary schooling (high school), 15% achieved some level of higher education (college), and only 0.5% had no education (23 cases out of a total of 4,798). Considering that in Peru the expected average age to finish secondary school is 16-17 years old in urban areas, only 6% of the adolescents would have a significant delay with respect to the educational level correspondent to their age. These figures are related with the high rate of enrollment in secondary school among youth in urban Ayacucho, which is around 80% for both boys and girls (INEI, Census 2007). However, the percentage of youth who continue studying after finishing secondary school is significantly lower, only the 48% of youth between 20-24 years old attend university or some other advanced educational institution.

On the other hand, when one considers the age groups of 30-34 or 40-44 years old, the age groups that most of the parents of the young people who I interviewed, the percentage of those who had studied only through primary school or did not have any formal educational level is increasing, while the percentage of those who had achieved secondary or some level of higher education decreased. Likewise, in those age groups, the disparities between men and women increased. Thus, for example, in the population of people 40-44 years old, 8% had no formal instruction, 30% had primary school, 26.6% achieved secondary school and 35.4%

had some level of higher education. Whereas the percentage of women without any level of instruction is 12%, in the case of men it is of only 2%. With respect to higher education (college), 28.5% of women obtained some level of college education, while in the case of men it was 43.5%.

A series of political and social processes have led to an increase in access to formal education, as well as to the growth of population that has reached secondary (high school) and higher levels (technical or university education) of education. Since 1920, and particularly, since the mid of the 20th century, the myth of progress by means of education was disseminated among peasants and the urban poor by the state and the domestic elites (Degregori 1986, 2010). Peasants and rural migrants in the city adopted this idea, and the access to free education has become a fundamental claim of social movements and a cause of massive rural-to-urban migrations. Indeed, gaining access to a formal secondary education and to the university has been one of the reasons to migrate to Ayacucho city (Caballero 1995). As the anthropologist Carlos Iván Degregori (1986) indicates, the myth of progress by means of education in Ayacucho and other places in Peru, has substituted or taken the place that had the myth of Inkarri or the hope of return of the Inca Empire. Several studies (e.g., Degregori 1986; Portocarrero and Oliart 1989; Zapata et al. 2008) have shown than access to formal education has been an aspiration of the peasants from the Sierra and of urban popular sectors as a way to improve their economic situation, to confront social discrimination ("to get respect"), and to improve themselves as persons. These aspirations that come from youth and their families have gone together with the policies of the successive governments that, since the first half of the 20thcentury, opened public schools in all the provinces of Peru with different aims, including the project of capitalist modernization, populist or democratizing

purposes. Since the decades of 1930 and 1940 respectively,[14]it is possible to observe an increase of primary schools and secondary schools in Ayacucho department (Zapata et al 2008).

The importance of access to education to the urban popular sectors and to the peasants in Ayacucho has also become clearer in activities such as the social mobilizations of youth and social organizations in support of the right of entry to education and the spreading of demands to improve the quality of public instruction. The generation of the movement of 1969 in favor of preserving the free public educational system is outstanding in Ayacucho, which culminated prevailed upon the authorities with the derogation of the law which put in risk this already achieved right[15]. During this struggle, the Unique Front of High School Students of Ayacucho (FUESA) emerged, which has a Marxist influence and exist until now, with the active participation of six (3 girls and 3 boys) of my 40 informants.

[14] In 1920, there were 137 schools of primary education in Ayacucho department, in 1933 there were 187, and in the next years these figures multiply: in 1943 there were 406 schools, in 1956 were already 614, and in 1964, this figure reached to be 820. In similar way the secondary schools had an increment: in 1920 there were 2 schools, which in 1953 were increased to 7 and in 1968 to 18 (Zapata et al Op. Cit).

[15] Education in Peru has been free since the year 1953. In 1969 the military government lead by the General Juan Velasco Alvarado, declared the Supreme Decree 006-69/EP, which eliminated free education for those students of state secondary schools who failed one course at the end of the school year, even if they passed the course later during the holiday period. This general disposition generated a wide movement of protest in Ayacucho and Huanta, cities where a "new generation of adolescents became the spearhead of an uprising, more massive and intense than any other struggle for land in that overwhelmingly peasant's region" (Degregori 2007: 4, my translation). In Ayacucho, the student movement was led by students from the School "Gran Unidad Escolar Mariscal Caceres", the biggest and oldest school of this city, where approximately half of their students had the impediment to register to for the next school year due to the application of the Decree DS006 (Degregori, 1990: 65-66). The organized secondary school students went on strike for an indefinite period. This strike was hardly repressed by the police, allowing for a massive popular protest that mobilized families, parents, teachers, students of secondary schools, university students, peasants and other sectors of the society. Finally, the government abolished the mentioned Decree.

Access to public education does not necessarily translate into more knowledge and academic abilities for students of different zones in the country. Although the quality of Peruvian public education, in general, has been poor (Ministerio de Educación 2010), the results of this were better in the capital (metropolitan Lima) and worse in other urban zones of the country and in the rural zones. A study conducted by the NGO GRADE (Cueto et al. 2005) in public schools in Ayacucho (in rural and urban zones) and in Lima (in urban zones), has shown that different to what happen with the schools in Lima, in rural and urban zones of Ayacucho the students did not get higher scores on the Mathematics and Language tests at the end of the year compared to the score obtained in those taken at the beginning of school year, in some cases the grades were decreasing. In comparison, in all the schools of Lima the students did show better grades at the end of the year.

With respect to the association between access to formal education and social mobility, there were few studies conducted that show some economic mobility among those who finished their studies at the university, and this occurred differently according to the economic level, income, place of residence and gender, variables that determined the increase in income due to highest educational level attained (Yamada 2007). The study carried out by Yamada shows that the marginal returns to education (increase of income per additional year of study) are heterogeneous along the distribution of individuals per income. The returns vary between 9.1% to the first decile[16] of the distribution (the lowest income) and 12.2% to the ninth decile of the distribution (the highest income), and are increasing as the level of income increases. These differences among marginal returns to education were associated with

[16] In descriptive statistics, a decile is any of the nine values that divide the ranked data into ten equal parts. In this case, ranking and splitting the population in deciles allows identifying people with the smallest (first decile) and largest (ninth decile) income.

variables such as family background, the quality of education and social networks. The returns also were higher in the case of those who finished the university, who studied in a private university, among men, and among professionals who live in Lima. My informants, who currently started to study at the university or planned to do so, have several disadvantages to really achieve social mobility through education: they used to face a series of challenges to finish the university (because long lecturers' strikes and the economic situation of the students), they only have access to public education, and they study in Ayacucho. If they are women, the chances could be even lower.

The educational institutions neither fulfill a role in promoting democratic values nor more equal social relations among students. To the contrary, the schools, colleges (García Blásquez 2001) and universities (Oliart 2000, 2010; Zavala and Córdova 2010) are also spaces of reproduction of racial and cultural discrimination in Ayacucho. As analyzed in the licentiate thesis of Garcia Blasquez (2001) conducted in the Mariscal Caceres School, it was found that students discriminate against their classmates because of their rural origins, for speaking Quechua along with Spanish, and because of their physical features. According to Oliart (2010), similar forms of discrimination and other subtle ways in which social hierarchies are reproduced among university students at the Faculty of Education in the public university of Huamanga.

Nevertheless, the degree of formal instruction has the potential to modify or overcome social hierarchies based on racial or ethnic criteria, since the level of formal education received continues to be associated with the "moral status" of the individual (De la Cadena 2004: 326) or his/her capacity of conforming to social or moral standards about of taste and propriety. Zavala and Córdova (2010), in a study made with university students of rural origin

in the public university of Ayacucho (Universidad Nacional San Cristobal de Huamanga) and the public university of Cusco (Universidad Nacional San Antonio de Abad del Cusco), describe the different ways in which formal education performs a "redeeming" role with respect to racial discrimination and the ways in which this operates during the period of being a university student. This role of the education has to do with interaction of racial categories with geographic, cultural, and educative dimensions in the construction of hierarchies of prestige and social value. A higher level of academic achievement would perhaps counteract in some way the inferiority established by the racial criteria (e.g., color of the skin, or other phenotypic characteristics related to be *indio* or *mestizo*), geographic origin (rural origin) or cultural background (e.g., as shown by the derogatory term "*motoseo*," which means speaking Spanish with a Quechua accent). More prestigious careers would be a form of "whitening" themselves or acquiring greater positive social recognition (Zavala and Córdova 2010). Among the most prestigious careers are law, accounting, administration and engineering because of the higher social value of these careers as well as for the high grades and test scores required to enter these paths. Less valued careers include education and agronomy, which is stigmatized for its association with the rural. Then, access to secondary and higher education for low-income youth in Ayacucho is more a promise for progress, but not a real means for social mobility because the poor quality of public education in this city and others. However, access to education has served to increase the social status of these youth within local and national ethnic and cultural hierarchies.

Informal Economy, Sources of Income and Job Opportunities

Most of the youth who participate in this study and their families work in permanent or temporary jobs in the commerce and service sectors, where the main economic activities are concentrated in Ayacucho city. An important part of these activities are executed in the informal, sector of the economy, which grew in Ayacucho since 1970s when there were massive migrations from rural areas (the country) to the city due mainly to the crisis in agriculture and the political violence. The rural migrants created their own jobs as street vendors or employed themselves in the sector of services in very precarious conditions (Caballero et al. 1995). Nowadays, the informal sector continues to be the primary source of work for migrants, youth and women.

An important commercial activity within peripheral districts in Ayacucho city is the Sunday cattle market (including cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs). In addition, the sale of second hand articles (the second hand market) has rapidly grown since the 90s, also with a large number of families involved in this activity in Sunday markets. Commerce in hardware, groceries, agrochemicals, auto parts and fuel are other common commercial activities. Teenagers and young people are involved as unpaid workers in this business mostly as assistants to their parents or relatives who own the business, and few are actually paid employees. With respect to the services sector, the main activity is interprovincial transport which is articulated with other related activities where low-income youth and their families work (e.g., services of taxis, moto-taxis, longshoremen, food sellers, bakers, among others). In second place are the services given by the workshops repairing and maintaining light and heavy vehicles.

According to the 2007 population census of Peru (INEI 2007), 34% of the total masculine economically active population (EAP) and 64% of the female EAP work in commerce sector and in sector of services in the district where most of my informants live. Most of them are vendors, in streets, markets and commerce, as well as workers of personal services or under-qualified workers of the services (e.g., cleaners). In the case of men, 21% of them work as builders and artisans, including the workers of a factory of soft drinks (one of the few in Ayacucho city) and the construction workers. On the other hand, 15% of men and 14% of women work as professionals. Most of them work as teachers, nurses, obstetrics, lawyers, accountants and other professions in the private or public sector.

Economic Activities of Youth

According to the last Census of 2007, one fourth of the teenage boys and nearly a fifth of the teenage girls (15-19 years old) in the area of this study are working or seeking employment. These figures are double in the next age group (20-24 years old). It is important to mention that the majority of the young people interviewed in this study and their social networks, worked in a permanent or temporary job, especially during the school holidays or at the end of the terms at the university. The calculation of the EAP index (economically active population index) takes as referent the population that is working or those who are actively seeking employment. For that reason, these young people who are temporary workers are not included formally as part of the economically active population.

Most of the economically active population who are 15-19 years old are workers in the tertiary sector (commerce and services activities) who do not have a specific labor qualification, and they receive the lowest income in the pyramid of income. They represent

59.22% of the men of this age group, and 87.27% of the women of this age group, figures that are almost double the total EAP of the selected districts. An important part of the circuit of services and commerce, in which the young people work, is connected to the markets and informal commerce, whose main costumers are the local population. Girls especially work in the family business or for acquaintances because their parents consider that this is a way to protect them from sexual abuse or pregnancy risk, and get some sort of control over their activities and people with whom they interact. Male teenagers mostly work in the public transportation sector, where mainly men work, as helpers or bus collectors or moto-taxis conductors. Another group of activities is the connected to the demands and needs of the university's population and the pre-university's students who are in specialized academies, particularly from the public university (UNSCH). Teenagers and young people work in services such as making photocopies, in Internet cabins, selling books obtained by piracy, selling music CDs, in typing services, and in bookshops or stationery stores. Finally, there is an organized circuit of employment around tourism, including work in hotels cleaning, as kitchen helpers, as waiters in restaurants and coffee shops, or in a small number of cases, elaborating and selling arts and crafts (this are mainly the case in family businesses).

Although the impact of new job positions is not as significant as was expected, the growth of formal businesses in the commerce sector and in the services sector is slightly increasing the job vacancies for youth. There are recently opened supermarkets, shopping malls, soda fountains and restaurants. These businesses offer teenagers and young people relatively more prestigious jobs with better working conditions for those who "know how to speak correctly" or "who have good appearance" or "good looks" (which is something not expressed as an innate attribute, but as a social target among the teenagers of Ayacucho city).

Many families and teenagers have a temporary job outside of Ayacucho city to supplement their incomes. The main source of temporary income is the agriculture and other jobs that are done in short seasons in Lima or other cities, such as domestic workers in houses, collectors, cleaners, and other activities according the demand and the contacts made through their families and friends networks. Several of the families who live in urban quarters of Ayacucho take part in temporary employment activities in agriculture in personal or family-owned small farms, or they are contracted for specific periods during sowing season or for harvesting crops.

It is necessary to mention that agriculture continues to be the activity where the largest percentage of the EAP of the Ayacucho department, 46% of the EAP during the year 2007, is concentrated.[17]An important source of jobs in agriculture for teenagers is related to coca production, which has been progressively displacing the licit agriculture production in Ayacucho department. Narco-trafficking in the jungle side of Ayacucho is ongoing since 1960s (Novak et al. 2008), and coca production is referred to as a source of employment and reason to temporary migration to the jungle side of Ayacucho since the 1970s, but which decreased in the 80s due to political violence in that zone (Caballero et al. 1995).The expansion of narco-trafficking in this zone has been on-going since 1999, and the illegal production of coca leaves represented 52.2% of all the gross value of agrarian production of the Ayacucho region in 2006.The cultivation of coca leaves for narco-trafficking has more economic value than the total amount of licit cultivations of the region (Novak et al. 2008). In 2006, the impact of the narco-trafficking measured only in terms of the cost of production of

[17] The importance of agricultural activity in the Ayacucho department was decreasing gradually because of the crisis of living in that area as well as because of migration to the cities. In 1972, the rural EAP was 67% out of the total EAP; in 1981, it decreased to 65%, in 1993 went to 50% and in the year 2007 it was 46%.

drugs (coca leaves, chemical inputs and workforce), represented approximately 16.5% of the economy of the Ayacucho department. Adding the amount of other activities depending on the money obtained by the sectors that live directly or indirectly off the narco-trafficking, Novak and colleagues estimate that more than 20% of the departmental economy of Ayacucho depends of narco-trafficking. Although it is predictable that the majority of resources generated by narco-trafficking in Ayacucho were invested in other departments of the country, researchers speculate that there would be *money* laundering in Ayacucho by means of money exchange houses, gambling houses or casinos, transport agencies, among others. From there, these authors affirm that at the moment the focus of the economy of Ayacucho is narco-trafficking and that the businesses emerged from money coming from this activity. The volume of the coca production, along with the relatively small size of the regional economy, supports this hypothesis.

Thus, most of job opportunities for youth are informal and illegal activities, underpaid and bad quality, low-status or unsecure jobs. Most of my informants, boys and girls (15-19 years old), accepted these jobs as they had to work to cover their basic needs or complement what their parents can offer to them.

Demilitarization and the Presence of the State and NGOs during the Post-Conflict Period: Recovering Citizenship?

The Ayacucho department was the place most affected by the internal war, and for that reason was in permanent state of emergency from 1981 until the end of 1999. During this period of 18 years, important civil and political rights (such as the right of assembly) were suspended, and control of the region was given to the Armed forces. The young men became easy

suspects of terrorism, so they lived with the anxiety of being accused or taken to the police station (Truth and Reconciliation Commission-Peru 2003).

The demilitarization of Ayacucho has been a gradual process and today,even though the military is absent in terms of political power, its symbolic power continue to be important among Ayacuchanos (Aronés 2003). I observed this in official ceremonies of the municipal government and in schools ceremonies, as well. The Sunday parades that are unavoidably organized at noon in the main square of Ayacucho city are an example of this military presence in the daily life. It is a sort of ritual that brings together the locals and tourists to see the military, police and civilians from a variety of institutions and organizations pass by. Children, teenagers and young people march at the rhythm of military bands wearing uniforms of their educational institutions with a martial attitude.

Together with the process of demilitarization, came an increased presence of the state through health institutions, educational institutions, and welfare organizations in very distant places (Huber et al. 2003: 28-29).Regarding public health services, the situation is similar to the education sector; after the end of the internal war there has been an expansion of health services in peripheral quarters but the quality of these services is poor. Specialized doctors and medicines are scarce, which has affected the resolutive capacity of local health services and users' confidence to attend them when they have a health problem.

The return of democracy to Peru after the fall of the Fujimori regime in 2000 reopened the debate about the decentralization and social participation in public policies as one of the necessary reforms to recover the function and legitimacy of the democratic system in Peru. The decentralization and democratization processes after the Fujimori government (1990-2000) generated spaces for citizens' participation in the election of regional and local

authorities and also allowed the elaboration of regional and municipal plans and budgets. However, the social participation of the population in these processes was affected by the fragmentation of civil society and the mistrust in the state institutions and its representatives. Two decades of political violence seriously weakened the social fabric, interpersonal trust, and faith in state institutions (Theidon, 2004).The social organizations (e.g., workers' unions, students' unions, vicinity organizations, professional associations) and especially their leaders were often chased, arrested, or killed. The army and the police, who repressed and committed abuses, were justifiably feared if not rejected. Likewise, there is distrust in the civil authorities because of the numerous cases of corruption and practices of obtaining votes with promises of government posts, spoils system, which are continuously denounced by the press in the local paper *La Calle* (The Street) and other local written and radio media. The daily interpersonal relations also were affected by the internal war as is remarked by the anthropologist Kymberly Theidon, who did fieldwork in communities from the north of Ayacucho. According to her, the war between the Shining Path and the forces of order was a war "between neighbors," in which many times, members of the same family belonged to opposing sides and neighbors or relatives turned out to be suspicious or accused of the death of loved ones (Theidon 2004: 174). As confirmed by Huber in their study about decentralization, youth representatives, the political groups, guilds or local social organizations of popular base had not been the protagonist in defining the regional policy, but instead the major players had been the state, NGOs and the Catholic and evangelical churches (Huber 2003). Municipalities are timid exceptions of state institutions with a relatively greater amount of support from the local population, which made it possible for, them to acquire more of a protagonist role and more functions in relation to local development during the last

years as part of the process of decentralization (Barrenechea 2010). These instances of local governance include some programs or organized activities aimed at adolescents. These are the DEMUNA (Defender of Women, Child and Adolescents), the municipal academy, or festivals and other events organized to offer teenagers and young people "healthy" entertainment, as the district halls call parties where alcohol and drugs are not allowed.

An important actor during the post-conflict period is the Nongovernmental organization (NGO), which increased in number and presence. According to data from the National Association of Centers, in 1988 there were 5 NGOs in Ayacucho, which mostly emerged to support agriculture and the development of rural areas. By 1997, the number of NGOs had increased more than tenfold, and there were 59 of them then. This number remained the same for the next years, registering 60 NGOs in 2004 and declined to 42 NGOs in 2007. These institutions outlined different projects and activities related to the reparations of the victims of political violence, the reconstruction of the department and its social development in rural zones as well as in urban zones.

Social participation and the exercise of citizenship have been the central elements of the discourse and working strategies of local NGOs. Several of these developmental institutions take an approach and a working strategy that has antecedences in its own philosophy and institutional objectives related to the empowerment and rights of the women, children, adolescents and peasants. In other cases, social participation was framed within the agenda of reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction, in agreement and in accordance with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR) about the need to deepen the construction of citizenship among the more vulnerable Peruvians during the internal conflict. Thus, different development NGOs and agencies in Ayacucho have had

an outstanding role in the promotion of spaces and discourses of harmonization and social participation in the instances of government and the implementation of policies and programs of public institutions, including the participation of adolescents and young people.

Several NGO projects implemented (with different perspectives and emphases) since the end of 1990 share a common language of rights, participation and equal opportunities, which are part of the institutional objectives that seek to contribute with democracy through the practice of citizenship and social inclusion in Ayacucho. This approach recognizes adolescents as individuals with rights, as well as with abilities to diagnose their needs, develop proposals and instigate change. The language of rights is promoted on large murals on school walls. In addition to those dedicated to Catholic saints or virgins, or those talking about menacing dangers for teens (drugs, alcohol), I found murals with messages like these: "Everyone deserves to have the opportunity to excel: We are different but we all have equal rights." Next to these phrases there are images of boys and girls, two of them with a physical disability (J.A. Quinones School). Another mural said: "Recovering values and rights," where words like justice, respect, humbleness, and equality are listed (San Juan Bautista School). In addition, experiences seeking to institutionalize students' democratic participation in schools, such as school municipalities and the Mayors, Aldermen and Student Leaders Association (AARLE), have achieved continuity for nine years with the support of the NGO.[18]

[18] Student's mayors and leaders have participated in public spaces such as the Participatory Budget of the Provincial Municipality of Huamanga, in the Local Coordination Council (CCL) where they obtained the approval of the "Implementation of school libraries in the peri-urban areas of Ayacucho" project for 2010.They have also participated in the Citizens Movement for Human Rights *Para que no se repita* ("Not to repeat"), contributed to the preparation of the Plan of Action for Children and Youth at regional and provincial levels and the design of the Regional School Curriculum, as well as in other areas (Tarea, 2009).

The language of rights has been recently used in the field of adolescent sexuality in Ayacucho and other parts of the country. The language of rights has been formally included in the public policy guidelines (Ministry of Health, 2005; Ministry of Education, 2008) but it has not been incorporated in the perspectives and daily practices of the staff of many public institutions. Few efforts have been made to implement a rights-based approach of national policy guidelines for adolescents' health and sexual education. Related policy guidelines and programs are very new (2007 onwards) and have been supported mainly by international agencies working in Peru. In 2008, the Ministry of Education and UNFPA developed a model plan to implement comprehensive sexual education in 68 schools from five cities (Lima, Callao, Huancayo, Ica and Pucallpa), which did not include Ayacucho. This situation has led the teachers and health providers whom I interviewed to think that adolescents' sexual rights are not a matter of governmental institutions but primarily an agenda of NGOs. The responsible of Education Advisement and Orientation in Huamanga (Ayacucho) recognizes that the sexual education contents in public schools depends practically on the particular views of each professor, because there are not national or regional specific guidelines, neither resources for training and monitoring sexual education contents and methodology in schools. For this reason, his office's strategy to implement the current sexual education guidelines is working with civil society allies. The scant presence and resources of the state in the field of sexual education might contribute to understand why some teachers and a regional representative of the Ministry of Education in Ayacucho looked to the NGO for results in this area and exempted themselves from their responsibility (workshop with teachers organized by the NGO).

Usually, NGOs make coordinated actions with public institutions of health and education, as well as with municipal services to protect and promote children's and teenagers' rights (municipal defender and school institutions of protection), or to give attention to victims of family and sexual violence, such as the Women Emergencies Center (Centro de Emergencia Mujer). In work on education and the sexual health of young people, as in other areas of intervention,[19] NGOs count with better qualified human resources with specialized methodologies and with objectives and strategies more clearly defined than most of the public institutions, or social and political organizations of the region. As far as they are concerned, although some officials of public institutions do not trust NGOs and their working methods, they admit the need to make alliances with these institutions to be able to reach certain targets in their sectors. For example, health institutions have goals related to preventive activities with adolescents, but they are not in the capacity to accomplish them because adolescents are no priority for the regional budget (interviews with officials from the regional offices health and education). In this case, these efforts to promote the rights of young people are not continuous; they rely heavily on the support of NGOs and tend to be unsustainable as these NGOs cannot maintain permanent programs or establish solid commitments with public institutions or social organizations (Yon 2013). In the areas of sexual and reproductive health of youth, the NGO where my informants participated supported a specialized health service for youth in one of the four health centers of the district they live in, as well as the active participation of trained youth (by the NGO) in the preventive work of the health center. However, the lack of personnel for this specific program and the resistance to accept sexual

[19] For example, Barrenechea (2010) confirmed in his study about the local policy of reparations for the victims of political violence, that NGOs have become relevant local actors in the Ayacucho context of institutional weakness, lack of resources, and social and political fragmentation.

rights and gender approaches were serious obstacles to achieve the NGO's aim of improving health services for youth that respond to their needs in sexual and reproductive health, and from their perspective.

A higher density of NGOs in a city as relatively small as Huamanga gives rise to a sort of over-supply of activities for some groups of population to whom the projects are aimed. In the case of youth, the coexistence of several NGOs and projects meant for youth, have induced the participation of some of these boys at the same time in various projects, and the NGOs ends up competing for their time. At the same time, there is a certain social and economic dynamism associated with the work of the NGOs, and in some cases, this has produced public debates of wide diffusion around the activities and discourses of these institutions. The NGOs have generated public activities related to their diverse initiatives on the themes of violence against women and children, prevention of pregnancy in adolescents, consumption of alcohol and drugs, human rights and reparations to the victims of political violence, citizenship participation, rural development and diminishing of poverty, among other similar topics. To spread or promote messages regarding the themes mentioned, the NGOs organize fairs and street bands, produce and broadcast radio programs or campaigns in the mass media, among other activities. Depending on the theme and the relevance activities have for institutions or sectors of the society (churches, regional government, leaders of student organizations or workers union, professional associations), some discourses or proposals from some NGOs led to passionate polemics or declarations of the Catholic Church or other sectors. This is, for example, the case in debates about women's sexual and reproductive rights (e.g., therapeutic abortion, or in cases of rape, access to the day after pill in public health services) and the rights of the young people (e.g., sexual education or

information about condoms in schools). Although NGOs are not able to replace public policies in sexual education and prevention of gender violence because limitations of their projects in coverage and continuity, they are important for introducing gender and sexual rights perspectives in public debates about these themes in a context highly influenced by the official position of the Catholic Church.

Access to Media and the Internet

Approximately 83% of the population in Ayacucho has access to the radio and 65% have access to television in the neighborhoods where most of my informants live (Municipality of San Juan Bautista 2010). All youth participants are used to watching television every day or some days of the week. The list of television channels with open signal in Ayacucho include all national channels (six in total), which combine entertainment, news, series and soap operas produced in Lima, with others made in Mexico, Colombia, the USA, and Korea, among others. In addition, there are a couple of local channels. One of them is particularly popular among youth because it broadcasts music videos and teens can dedicate songs or send text messages (love messages, friendship greetings), which appear on screen. Additionally, few youth have access to cable television.

Adolescents usually prefer entertainment programs, including music videos, contests (such as local singing and dancing contests), Mexican and Korean soap operas (mostly intended for women), series and movies. Youth also like news programs, which they find "fun," such as Peruvian magazine programs that combine national and international news, curiosities and celebrity news, as well as interviews. TV programs are one of the topics of conversation at school, especially the most popular soap operas among teens, such as

“Rebelde,” played by a Mexican pop group of three young women and three young men. The only girl, who has neither electricity nor TV at home, generally watches TV at her neighbor’s or uncle’s. She visits them especially to watch TV. A TV set is one of the things she would like to have in the future, along with a career and a house. She explains that TV is important for her because helps her dissipate family problems and leave work worries aside, at least for a moment.

Television is seen not just as a source of entertainment, but also a medium for learning, results that are similar to anthropologist Rocío Trinidad’s findings in her ethnographic study on Peruvian rural areas (2002). Janet (19 years old), who has just entered a Technological Institute to study accountancy, thinks that television is a medium for learning and supports women who do not have access to higher education, since it allows them to make contact with what is currently happening, with the “real world”:

> .... I believe we women are ideal because even though we might not have higher education, we see and grasp a lot of things from television programs. And sometimes we see on television what happens in the real world, and based on that we think and say "oh, this should be this way."

Youth also listen frequently to radio programs, mainly musical programs, like a sort of companion while doing chores at home or work. The music they listen to is varied, including *huaynos* from the South and Center highlands of Peru, *cumbia* from Peruvian coastal cities, Latin American music, rock, reggaeton, hip hop and pop. Listening to the radio is very common at restaurants, shops, Internet booths and public transportation vehicles, such as motor rickshaws, buses and cabs. The stations that are frequently tuned in are varied, but the most common ones are the local stations, which combine popular music and phone calls coming in to send greetings or take part in contests. These radio stations advertise a variety of

products and services, including pre-university colleges, schools, local shops and other products and services for youth audiences. During the months prior to the application period to the university and at the beginning of the school year, advertising on educational institutions abounds, stressing the idea of progress associated with the access to technology, the prestige of the study centers and their connection with universities in Lima or agreements with educational foreign entities.

Internet usage is more assorted and less frequent than TV or radio consumption, as most teenagers have to go to a public booth and pay for it. Only 4% of the population had access to the Internet in their houses in 2007, but commercial booths started to appear in 2000, and facilitated the massive use of the Internet among youth (Huber 2002). Most young people use Internet once or twice a week and some every two weeks or more. The exceptions are those girls who have Internet access at home or work in a booth or any other place where it is available throughout the day. The cost of Internet in the cabins is relatively low (50-70 cents per half an hour, the same value as a ride fare on a public bus) and the access to these booths is now easier than it was few years ago, given the proliferation of Internet kiosks in every neighborhood. However, due to the lack of economic resources and the low-speed navigation service, the use of Internet is usually limited to specific objectives. From what I have learned in interviews and observations, teens use Internet for two main reasons: to interact socially through messenger or social networks, and to get information about a topic of study or personal interest. Furthermore, in the case of boys, Internet games (which mostly consist of catching or killing a character) are quite common, which is less frequent in the case of girls.

Social interaction on the Internet was mostly carried out through the *Hi5* social network and more recently, it has been replaced by *Facebook*. Friends and acquaintances contacted through the Internet have a strong foundation in the social and face-to-face adolescents' relationships. Virtual friends from youth social networks are mostly from Ayacucho with whom young people share friends, coming from their educational institutions, groups or common activities. These networks become much more extended according to specific interests, as it happens with those who sympathize with particular "urban tribes," "cultures or "scenes," such as goth, metal, hip-hop or emo, originated in the USA and Europe; or those interested in existentialism, literature or Japanese animation series. Inspired by these youth cultures, some groups appeared in Ayacucho city since the mid of the 90s (metals) and during the last decade (goth, hip hop and emo). Some of them know these transnational cultures by their friends in Ayacucho or Lima, but many know them by Internet. Internet have become in a resource for personal research and for the construction of youth identities (as will be developed in detail in Chapter 3), a way to expand symbolic and social references in an interconnected world which is much larger than the local context of Ayacucho or Lima.

Consumption and Markets: Languages of Modernization and Equalization among Peers

As already documented by anthropologist Ludwig Huber (2002), Ayacucho is a city where a consumer culture dominated by the market has progressed, while remaining as one of the poorest cities in the country. This is observed in various fields, including those especially important for adolescents, such as: trendy clothing and in general, culture and improvements of their body, music and entertainment venues, cellphones and other electronic devices. Products sold in stores in Ayacucho are the same or similar (slight differences) to those

available at a low or medium price in Lima, the Peruvian capital.[20] Like in Lima (see Golte and Leon, 2010) and other cities of Peru, Ayacucho has parallel markets that provide similar products available to different socioeconomic sectors. "Brand" clothes and cell phone stores with higher prices are around the historical center of Ayacucho. There are many boutiques and outlets selling mobile phones, and some electronics stores and supermarkets that have emerged in the last 5 years. Some of these expensive or modern stores, as well nice restaurants, cafés and ice cream shops, are similar to those located around the Main Square of Lima or Kennedy Park in Miraflores, which are frequently visited by tourists in the Capital City of Lima. Teens who participated in the study do not usually buy at these places; they just walk around the area having a look. There are alternative shopping places, as the numerous stalls around and within the market of Santa Clara (just 4 blocks from the Plaza de Armas), or street vendors working in the city center. There, youth can find diverse goods, similar to those displayed by the most expensive arcades, but taking other brands or "*bamba*" (fake or replica). Likewise there is the flea market at San Juan Bautista district on Sundays, which sells second hand clothing and shoes, cell phones and other items. Other option is buying cosmetics, jewelry and clothing from Lima-based companies who sell their catalog products on credit, making them more accessible. At least two of the young female promoters sell these products in their spare time, and they are at the same time, their own costumers. Finally, it is possible to find affordable clothes for rent or friends who will lend their clothes when

[20] Each time I traveled to Lima to visit my parents, I could see that the mannequins exhibited at the doors of the shopping arcades *(galerias)* in Ayacucho were similar. They displayed the same items of the same brands and colors that could be seen in both cities: Lima and Ayacucho. During one of my trips, I bought a present for the girls I interviewed, thinking that it was something that they would not find in Ayacucho. But, the same denim bags that were in fashion among adolescents in Lima, with exactly the same designs and the same brands, were sold around the market of Santa Clara (Ayacucho) and almost at the same price.

adolescents need to dress up clothes for a special occasion. Cell phones are also valuable goods among youth and they bought them at the facilities of phone companies, as well as on the black market (where phones that have been stolen or lost are sold at lower prices). According to the Peruvian Census of 2007, less than 50% of the people declared to have a cell phone in peripheral districts of Ayacucho city, but the informal market of cell phones become so large in the last years following similar tendency already documented in low-income quarters of Lima, the Peruvian capital (see: Mujica 2007). Several of my informants had a cell phone, and they were able to change it if it does not work anymore or it is stolen.

A significant area of influence of global markets among youth in urban Ayacucho (and beyond) is body presentation. The improvement of the body is a significant reference in the forms of comparison and differentiation among youth in urban Ayacucho. Racial, cultural and geographic hierarchies (see Chapter 6), historically rooted in colonial times, are mediated by urban and modern looks shaped by transnational fashion and markets in the 21st century. The ethnographic study held by the Peruvian anthropologist Patricia Oliart (2010) among students of Education at the public university of Ayacucho (Universidad Nacional San Cristobal de Huamanga), shows that clothing is a social indicator that first-year students use to differentiate them among the rest, trying to demonstrate who is the closest to the city-dwellers or the peasants, the two poles of differentiation regarding social taxonomy and cultural and territorial differences. In my study the great significance of clothing as a social marker for teens stands out in a context of current social hierarchies of class, ethnicity and territory (urban/rural) in the city of Huamanga, as is detailed in Chapter 3. Wearing certain clothes is a way to seek inclusion or recognition as part of the group to which one belongs or would like to belong to.

Boys and girls' styles in Ayacucho city have referents in the transnational market and culture. In both cases, clothing often has the name of any internationally well-known brand, such as Abercrombie, Armani Exchange, Equipment, Navy, or Reebok, printed on it. They are considered prestigious brands from the USA or other countries, which have been imitated in a small clothing factory in Lima and sold in streets and shops of Ayacucho. Something similar happens with the Nike or Adidas tennis. Thus, trendy consumer's goods, despite the precarious economy of youths, have a central role in the rationality of social relations organized through mechanisms of symbolic distinction (Solé Blanch, 2006). Following the sociologist, Charles Tilly (1998), it could be said that clothing is a kind of symbolic mechanism that links the internal differences with the urban teens in Ayacucho, helping rearrange or expand the boundaries of external categories of class or other forms of social differentiation which make divisions within them and between them and other teenagers, not only from Peru but also from the world. As happens in other parts of the world (e.g., Reguillo, 2000; Solé Blanch, 2006) clothing has become a sort of urban youth language emerged in transnational markets used in to express youth identities and social positions in Ayacucho city. However, this language does not create a "global youngster," but is "relocated" by the youth themselves and their local contexts (Reguillo, 2000). On the local scene of Ayacucho, for example, international trends are reconfigured according to cultural preferences (tastes), forms of socialization (gendered moral rules, diversity of peer groups or "youth tribes"), and economic organization (purchasing power, expansion of parallel markets and the informal economy, diversity in material: qualities and prices).

Those youth who are affiliated or have sympathy for metal, goth, hip hop and emo, youthful groups deemed anti-establishment, used clothing as one of their key identity

signifiers. It is precisely their clothing that makes them noteworthy, even though their members can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand (especially those who identify with gothic or hip hop subcultures). The clothing is useful for the dual purpose of differentiating themselves from the majority of their peers, and expressing their dissatisfaction with consumerism and other hegemonic ideologies of society (Hubber, 2002). Paradoxically, as noted by Golte and Leon (2010) in their study about young people from Lima, clothing, music and other identifiers of their culture, link them to a transnational and local market, and the media machine they criticize. For example, hats, hooded sweatshirts, and sunglasses, associated with a Hip hop style, or black T-shirts with heavy metal icons, are patterns followed in Lima based on the international youth fashion, and these clothes are sold at different prices in streets and boutiques of Ayacucho. In addition, there is a much smaller circuit of gothic clothing and accessories, these are mainly bought in Lima and circulate within the small group of boys identified with the gothic culture: black jackets with gothic-style snaps, boots, and black skinny trousers.

Included-Excluded Youth

The youth, who participated in this study, live in one of the poorest and marginalized departments of Peru. Ayacucho is a department from the Sierra region (Andean zone), historically excluded by the economic agro-based export model that favors the Coast of the country, as well by the ethnic discrimination that marginalizes the indigenous population. The situation of poverty and marginalization of Ayacucho and the *Ayacuchanos* worsened during the internal armed conflict that developed in the period of 1980 through 1999. During the war, more than 30,000 people died, families were broken apart, their lands and cattle were lost, and

many of them had to settle in new locations and were poorer than before (Truth and Reconciliation Commission-Peru 2003)

The low-income youth who are part of this study are mostly sons and daughters of rural migrants who left their lands to escape from poverty or political violence. These youth are part of a new generation of *Ayacuchanos* (people from Ayacucho) who have participated of historical changes in the social composition and organization of Ayacucho city during the decades of the 80s and 90s years. As result of the massive forced displacements from the rural zones of the department of Ayacucho to its capital city and the emigration of aristocratic families, this urban center is no longer a seigniorial city but one of rural migrants and their descendants. The children of Quechua farmers (*campesinos*) are *mestizo* students that have participated in recent processes of social inclusion (e.g., access to education and health services) and political democratization (e.g., decentralization processes and participatory policies) in a post-conflict situation in Ayacucho city. They have not experienced directly the internal war, and integrate NGO programs promoting young people's rights and citizen participation. However, these have been very incomplete processes of social integration (to the regional and national society) that have not changed the economic situation of the youth and their families. These young boys and girls look like their parents in the type of informal occupations they have access to, which is related to their economic deprivation and daily challenges. They are still second-class citizens on the basis of their ethnicity, geographical provenience, and social class.

As I reveal in the following chapters, the forms of social integration and social exclusion of youth are related in important ways with their cultural scenarios and forms of

agency, as well with several situations of social and sexual vulnerability that they have to confront. The access of low-income youth to local and transnational resources, opportunities and ideas depicted in this chapter, shape different cultural narratives about gender and sexuality (which I will examine further in Chapters 3 and 4) and are the larger frame that is needed to understand the gender games and sexual projects of these youth (discussed in Chapter 5). Likewise, forms of social exclusion of youth are interrelated with social inequalities and hierarchies that shape sexuality and sexual health of youth. As I will show in Chapter 6, economic and ethnic exclusions configure unequal opportunities and social relations, which intersect with gender and sexual hierarchies among low-income youth. At the same time, forms of social exclusion related to gender and sexual behaviors, are also manifestations of social inequalities affecting these youth (e.g., the moral status of a girl because the same sexual behavior can vary according their ethnic and geographic provenance). Likewise, paradoxical tensions between forms of social inclusion and exclusion of low-income youth in the city of Ayacucho contribute to produce situations of vulnerability of these youth to sexual abuse and sexual risks (Chapter 7). In sum, this chapter introduces significant aspects of the larger social and historical frame in which sexuality of low-income youth interacts with social exclusion and social inequality in urban Ayacucho. In all the processes depicted it is possible to notice both forms of social exclusion and inequity, and the active ways in which Ayacuchan youth seek social inclusion or recognition through the forms of social integration offered by the state and the markets.

CHAPTER 3: INSTITUTIONALIZED DISCOURSES ABOUT YOUTH SEXUALITY IN AYACUCHO CITY

The walls of the girls' bedrooms where we sometimes met or where I conducted the interviews were adorned with posters of multiple characters, messages and images, popular among youth in urban Ayacucho. Posters of young artists and singers prevailed and most of them were also displayed in newspaper kiosks and stalls selling CDs and videos located around the historic center of Huamanga. Among the most common images were those of the Mexican youth group RBD or Rebelde ("Rebel"), a pop music group. On the wall posters, the girls from the Rebelde group appeared in miniskirts or shorts, which the boys and girls considered to be "a sexy but rather daring look". There were pictures and posters of individual actors and singers, including the boys from Rebelde and other Latin American young artists, such as the Puerto Rican singer Chayanne and teenage characters from Korean soap operas. Girls said they liked them because they were *cueros* (expression meaning "cute" and "hot") or because despite their popularity they were not *creídos* (arrogant boys). In addition, alongside with posters featuring those stars, there were religious figures, such as the face of Jesus or the Virgin Mary or local images of Christ, such as the Lord of Quinuapata or the Lord of Maynay, which were displayed on the walls as spiritual protection or to express devotion. In the same collage, there were also posters or calendars developed by youth promoters of the NGO where they participated, which challenged taboos around youth sexuality, promoted the use of condoms and encouraged girls to get their boyfriends to respect their decisions. Gothic, metal, emo[21] and punk signs and drawings were present in some cases, although the girls did

[21] Emo is a style of rock music characterized by melodic music emerged in the mid-1980s hardcore punk movement of Washington, D.C., where it was known as "emotional hardcore" or "emocore". It is

not consider themselves as members of these subcultures or communities. On the wall of one of the girls´ bedrooms there was a message in an emo-punk language combination warning her not to hurt her heart. Finally, there were several messages and poems regarding relationship break-ups and friendship.

Figure 4: Posters on the Wall of one of the Girl´s House

This description is a visual representation of the confluence of diverse symbols and characters that are meaningful for youth in the cultural settings they share in urban Ayacucho. The cultural world of these youth can be depicted as a "busy intersection", a metaphor used by anthropologist Renato Rosaldo to name a place “where a number of distinct social processes intersect”; “a space for distinct trajectories to traverse, rather than containing them

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also a term used to name an alternative youth culture “characterized by introversion and withdrawal from an outside (adult) world perceived as unsympathetic, misunderstanding and demanding with a concomitant emphasis in negative and depressive moods, and suicidal ideas. Externally, Emos show a preference for dark colors in clothes, hairstyle ad make-up, and for androgynous styles” (Ketteman 2011: 46).

in complete encapsulated form" (Rosaldo 1993: 17). This view challenges the traditional vision of culture as a whole and coherent set of patterns and shared meanings. Cultural settings of youth are shaped by competing narratives produced by different actors and institutions, although the coexistence of them does not mean that they all have the same influence on adolescents, or that they ¨work¨ similarly among them. According to my ethnographic research, the family, the Catholic Church, the school, the mass media, NGOs, and peer groups, are among the most relevant social agents who offer messages about values, meanings and codes of conduct that influence, in different ways (eg. adherence, rejection, resignification), the understandings of Ayacuchano youth regarding sexuality. In this chapter, I introduce these social agents focusing on their discourses about sexuality and their articulations with youth lives. A starting point in this chapter is that the social relationships of youth with particular institutions (their forms of articulations, opportunities and resources they find there), contributes to understand their cultural relationships with narratives promoted by these institutions. In this point, I follow in part research about socialization and sexual health of youth (Azjen and Fishbein 1980; Bandura 1986; Miller et. al. 1998; L'Engle and Jackson 2008), which has shown that the type of bonds between adolescents and socializing agents is strongly associated with the impact of these agents in adolescents' sexual behavior. However, echoing Hirsch (2008) and other anthropological studies, I do not assume that the influence of these institutions is reduced to binary options: the affiliation of youth to these institutions' narratives or the rejection of them. My aim in this chapter is to introduce the larger cultural and social framework in which youth actively interact with these institutions and their cultural narratives about sexuality.

There is an identifiable religious narrative about sexual restraint of youth influenced by a Catholic morality in schools and families. While some variations exist, this narrative is focused primarily on girls and seeks to protect their moral standing and to control their sexual agency, both in terms of what they are able to do and what they appear to do. It is present in the official discourse of the Catholic Church and other Christian churches. It permeates sexuality education and extra-curricular activities in educational institutions, and is predominant in the rules and advice given by significant adults with whom adolescents have day-to-day relationships: parents and teachers. At the same time, a growing range of consumer products and images of a globalized world circulate together with such religious and adult narrative, offering various models of masculinity and femininity, international trends, and new communities to become part of online meeting spaces and potential boyfriends or girlfriends ("*ciberenamoradas/os*").

Regarding marketing and other mass media products consumed by teenagers, the most common images are sexy girls and boys, who have (in some cases) sensual and erotic flirtations or encounters (particularly in music videos). News items or campaigns about preventing pregnancies among adolescents are very rarely shown and only on special dates. Likewise, although it is still new and marginal, there is a discourse around gender equity, sexual and reproductive rights, and citizenship participation, promoted by some public institutions (such as the Ministry of Women and the Municipal Ombudsman for Children and Youth or DEMUNA) and NGOs.

Families: Absences, Norms, Generational Distances and Conflicts

Almost all respondents lived with some members of their nuclear family: both parents, father or mother, mother and stepfather, and siblings. In some cases, they also lived with their grandmother, grandfather, a cousin or other relatives who helped with housework. However, the absence of one or both parents for long periods was common because they worked in their fields or in the lands of others in rural areas of Ayacucho. Others, who worked as agricultural technicians, civil construction workers or street vendors, had similar dynamics: they had to go where they find jobs or clients. In other cases, the father or mother was absent because they abandoned the family.

Most teens talked very little about their daily lives with their parents and had constant arguments with them. Distance and generational conflicts between adolescents and their parents in the city of Ayacucho were not only related to the fact of experiencing different life stages. In addition to having grown up in different historical time periods, sons and daughters had access to different forms of "cultural capital" (Bourdieu 1986), which has potentially given them better resources to deal with the urban environment and at the same time, got away from their parents. As explained in Chapter 2, growing up in the outskirts of the capital of Ayacucho and not in the rural area (as their parents), have expanded educational opportunities and access to media, technology and information of low-income youth, who were in great disadvantage regarding medium and high-class youth but in better situation than their parents. As it has been shown in classical anthropological studies (see Mead 1970), generational distances between parents and children were associated to differences in ways of

thinking, values, codes, speech and dressing styles, as well as the ways they interact and find or access to information.

The gaps between the cultural worlds of parents and children hindered communication and understanding between them, resulting in conflict with consequences of various degrees for teens. Consequences ranged from facing stricter restrictions to leave or being obliged to do a greater number of errands, being kicked out of the house or attempting to commit suicide. For example, Elvis, who had been *metalero* (metal rock follower) and was *gótico* (goth) when I interviewed him, left home because his parents disagreed with his dress code and behavior. The worst insult he received from his parents was when they told him that he embarrassed them. At the time of my fieldwork, Elvis had a better relationship with his parents, who have already "accepted" him. He explained to me that he made them understand that being different was not wrong and that unlike ordinary children, "he is not *hueco*" (hollow) but "*tiene cabeza*" (uses his head, thinks). He proved himself that he "uses his head" when considering his black clothing as a way to express his reflection on the dehumanization of society. The proof for his parents is that he was working to pay almost all their expenses while they stayed at the farm. Elvis and other interviewees said they had wanted to commit suicide affected by parents' misunderstanding and frequent conflict situations or violence in their family.

Parents' and children's participation in distant cultural worlds strengthen peer groups and in some cases the Internet as sources of knowledge. It is a situation where children did not expect to learn from their parents while adults and teens learned mainly from their peers; this same situation is noticed among Chilean youth by Zárzuri (Zárzuri 2000). Moreover, in

some cases, children taught or helped their parents about “modern” or “urban” things, such as speaking in Spanish without interferences of Quechua (indigenous language), looking information in Internet or providing information about the human body or contraception. A society where their members learn mainly from their contemporaries is called a “co-figurative culture” (attending to the figurative ability to imagine and extrapolate) by Margaret Mead (1970) in her classification of cultures according to generational gaps. This co-figurative culture is different from a “post-figurative culture,” where children learn from adults, as it used to be in the rural society where parents of urban youth grow up. Mead identified times when configuration will be dominant due significant and sudden changes in culture, as it happens with the children of rural migrants in Ayacucho, which create situations in which the experiences of the young generation to be very different from that of the adults. However, parents are not willing to lose their authority, whether or not they fully understand what is happening to their sons and daughters.

Parents accepted that their children “know more than them” about some topics, such as those related to technology or some formal knowledge obtained in school. However, the situation was different regarding issues linked to sexuality. It is assumed that such issues are in a forbidden and dangerous realm, an area that needs to be regulated or supervised by adults, especially in the case of girls. That is the reason neighbors used to inform parents about what they consider potentially problematic situations, like girl and boy who were getting too close or a girl who used to change boyfriends. At the same time, parents said little or nothing to their children about specific aspects of sexuality. At meetings arranged by the NGO where youth participate, some mothers and few fathers who attended said they did not talk explicitly

about sexuality with their children because they feared they would encourage sexual activity among teens, discomfort or lack of information. When mothers touched on the subject, especially in the case of girls, it was to prevent them from becoming pregnant or being "fooled" by boys. Parents also advised to control and restraint girls' public behavior, especially in their relationships with boys to avoid "gossip" about their behavior. That is, girls must not just be "decent" (honorable), but must also appear to behave "decently" (to be under no suspicion), as Gladis, a 17-year old girl and sexual health advocator, told me:

> My parents have also talked to me, they sometimes told me I should be more careful with the way I behave, being a decent person, something like self-controlled. [..] Because sometimes when girls are walking with their partners, people talk behind your back, they misunderstand everything, saying bad things about you and all of that, but that is not as important as knowing one has to behave modestly anywhere, that is what my mom tells us.

As I will analyze in detail in Chapters 4 and 5, girls may share parents' fears but not the restrictions associated to them. Most of the girls, including Gladis, had to accomplish with their parents' norms to avoid punishment, but at the same time, they actively sought the ways to transgress these norms when were far from the sight of their relatives. By their side, adults usually described transgression of parental norms as immature and irresponsible behavior and associated it with "bad company," peer pressure or peer influence. Parents were right regarding the importance of peers in the everyday life of youth but they omitted their children's views, desires and agency. The interpretation of these transgressions by parents was other expression of generational gaps and lack of communication between them and their children. The narrative of María, the mother of a 16 year-old girl, is an example of this way of thinking:

> I always told my daughters about how they have to behave as decent girls. Since they started to have *la regla* [menstruation] I insisted more about that because, you know miss, anything could happen because bad companies. Other girls are *pandilleras* [from the gangs] or crazy girls who do not have a mother that guide them because are working the whole day, many things. These girls may *inquietar* [encourage] my daughters to meet boys, or to go to the discos and there they drink alcohol and meet boys, you know that boys are irresponsible and only want to have a good time, and after, after the girls will suffer! For that, I always ask my daughters who are their friends, where they go and with whom.

The generational cultural gap was only one source of conflict between youth and their parents. Others were related to what parents and children felt unfulfilled obligations on both sides. Parents were expected to protect, support and being consistent in relation to rules imposed on youth. Marylin, a 17 year-old sexual health advocate, was in constant conflict with her mother, who "does not believe in anything she says." Indeed, the day we had the first interview, her mother called to check where she was and I had to talk to her to convince her it was true. After that, Marylin's mother hung up the phone. Marylin said her mother did not trust her because she did not understand her. She explained that her mother thought she was "a crazy girl" because she was more cheerful than her sisters, she dressed "cool," and in addition she had failed two subjects in school. But Marylin emphasized that she is not "crazy" but holds a grudge against her mother because she did not used to take enough care of her when she was a child, so one of her father's co-workers almost raped her. That is why, when her mother forbids her something, she "acts even worse" as a sign of rebellion. Clarita, also a sexual health advocate, suggested similar reasoning when her father is upset because she has arrived home drunk (*tomada*), arguing that he does exactly the same: he drinks and gets drunk too.

The Catholic Church: Presence in the Everyday Life of the City

The influence of the Catholic religion in the cultural and political life of the city of Ayacucho is notoriously significant and date since the sixteenth century, when the Catholic Church arrived to Ayacucho together with the Spanish Conquerors (Zapata et al. 2008). Catholic religion is an important dimension of the identity of the city of Ayacucho for city dwellers and Peruvian tourists. The capital of Ayacucho is known as "the city of the 33 temples" to emphasize the large number of Catholic temples in a relatively small city. Besides, the *Semana Santa* (Holy Week) is the main holiday and fest in Ayacucho together with the Carnivals (Zapata et al. 2008). The Catholic Church and their authorities are part of the Consensus Table to fight against Poverty. It is one of the most important regional bodies to define social policies (Huber et al. 2003) and the opinion of the local bishop influence significantly activities regarding sexual and reproductive health. Moreover, the Catholic religion is inserted into everyday life of Ayacuchanos thanks to a long process of "hybridization" or cultural syncretism[22] with indigenous religions. Local people had found a proper sense of ideologies, institutions and social spaces created by the Catholic Church (Marzal 1988). In this ethnographic study, I found a strong presence of the Catholic Church beyond the parishes; it was in educational institutions and rites, leisure activities and mass festivities involving teens.

Protestant churches in Ayacucho are fairly recent, having grown rapidly since 1982 during the period of political violence because the spiritual and social support offered by

[22] In cultural terms, anthropologist Manuel Marzal concludes that the transformation of the religious beliefs of Peruvian indigenous was a process "in part additive, in part of substitution and in part of synthesis between the beliefs, rituals, forms of organization and the ethical standards of the two religious systems in contact [the Catholic and the Andean]" (Marzal 1988: 55).

Protestants to the people affected by the internal war. Evangelical, Pentecostal, Assemblies of God, Mormon and other Protestant Churches are gaining some attendants among teenagers, but their cultural influence is more limited to certain neighborhoods and families and they are much more widespread in rural areas.[23]

According to the latest Census (INEI 2007), 84% of the population aged 15-19 in the city of Ayacucho is Catholic, 11.53% is Evangelical or Christian, 1.38% belongs to other religions, and 3.2% does not profess any religion. Among my informants, most of them are also Catholic, of a total of 40 respondents, 34 affirmed to be Catholic and confirmed their parents are Catholic too. A teenager is Evangelical, one is Mormon and four said they are agnostic or have no religion. All who do not follow any religion are males; two considered themselves gothic and the other two, materialistic. Although only four of the interviewed teenagers participated in their churches' activities (Catholic, Mormon and Evangelic), most of them have visited the parish on several occasions. Almost all of them attended preparation programs either for the First Holy Communion or Confirmation. Confirmation was, for some, a way to start the link with the parish and then become a catechist or assistant to catechist. Others were motivated to join Catholic youth groups and several of them participated in the nearby parishes' groups. Unlike the decision-making process for the first Communion and Confirmation, youth participation in social and organizational activities offered by churches, was clearly voluntary.

[23] See Chirinos and Del Pino (1994) about the expansion of evangelical churches during the period of political violence.

The Virgin Mary and the Body as a Temple

The narrative about sexuality promoted by the Catholic Religion defines the body as sacred, is focused on the sexual repression of girls and their bodily responsibility to others, and proposes the Virgin Mary as the ideal model of women to follow. These contents were disseminated in the activities of the parishes for youth, including preparatory meetings for Confirmation, spiritual camps ("*retiros*") and other activities coordinated with public and private schools in Ayacucho. The body is defined as a temple of God, a place inhabited by the Spirit of God that should be respected and taken care of avoiding impure acts. Under this perspective, sexual relations before marriage are disrespectful to their body, but provisions and penalties are mainly concentrated on women because their reproductive capacity is considered a gift of God that should be especially protected, and the exhibition of their bodies may cause the lust of boys. The honorable, decent or *digna* woman is the one who preserve her virginity until marriage and take the precaution of dressing their body in ways to avoid inciting lust, as it is expressed by a catechist during a preparation meeting for Confirmation and repeated in similar ways by other catechists and teachers in the courses of Religion and others:

> The Virgin Mary is our mother and model for feminine virtue and modesty. Because of her purity Mary was chosen to bear the son of God. Every Catholic girl is called to see herself as a vessel of grace, her reproductive capacity is given by God and for that, she have to protect and respect her body. A Catholic girl has to keep her virginity until marriage. Her body should not be to incite lust, she should take the precaution to avoid inciting boys with clothing that is very tight or exposes bare flesh. You, girls, are responsible for that and could not say that you are innocent and wear what is just on fashion…. (Catholic catechist in charge of the Confirmation sessions).

This view is shared by the Mormon Church, as it was confirmed by Kimberly, a 16 year old girl and one of my informants affiliated to this Church;

> Kimberly: The dignity of women is also something very important.
> Carmen: What is the dignity of women?
> Kimberly: [The dignity] of all, but in the case of women it is more [important]. To be honorable (*digna)* is for example to have……; well, for the church, honorable is how you call a woman who, let's say, comes to her marriage a virgin.

In the words of an evangelical pastor, his church defines the body as the temple of God as the body is "the unity between the flesh and the soul, sex and love," but it does not imply imposing virginity or chastity until marriage. Evangelical pastors come from the local neighborhoods and have sons and daughters who cohabit with their partners but are not married, which is common among at least a third of the local families in urban Ayacucho. According to Jimmy, a 17 year old boy and the only interviewee belonging to an evangelical religion, he has not have the opportunity to talk about issues related to sexuality in his church, but judging by the behavior of the Pastor's daughters and sons, the issue of virginity or chastity before marriage is not a problem; for him their way of life is a clear signal of that which has also a support in the Bible (see his testimony below). Jimmy has not had his sexual debut yet because he wants to have first time sex with the girl he is in love, something that has not happened yet. He says that this delay depends on his own decision and has nothing to do with his religious beliefs.

> Carmen: And, in your church, what do they tell you about sexuality issues?
> Jimmy: We have never talked about that, they never tell us anything. But the Pastor's daughters, who are two, and his son, had their own children and they are not even married. I think it is normal for them because if Abraham had a son with her servant, God wanted something for them.
> Carmen: And the idea I heard the other day about the body as a temple, what does it mean?

> Jimmy: They say the body is the temple of God and the church is just a place to worship.
> Carmen: And this idea has something to do with your decision of not having sexual experiences until you feel you're in love, or has nothing to do it?
> Jimmy: No, that's my decision.

For the Catholic Church, the use of "modern" contraceptives and emergency contraceptive pills is also considered a way to undermine the dignity of women, since it is "refusing the God's gift of life" as the only recognized purpose of sex is procreation. In addition, modern contraceptive methods, such as pills or intrauterine devices (IUDs), are assumed to be abortive. Emphasizing in the particular responsibility of girls to preserve their dignity, a nun advised them during a Religion class about premature sexual relations and the use of contraception:

> You are too young to get married and have children, you have to study first. Do not believe that it is as easy as using a contraceptive method, a pill, a condom, as I heard of some of you [referring youth sexual health advocators]. First, having sex before getting married is a sin, and socially, it is bad for you, particularly if you are women: after having sex, who will respect you? You lose your dignity. Second, sexuality is a sign of God's love, why? God have given us the capacity to procreate, and women particularly, have blessed to have in their uterus the miracle of a new life. According to the God's laws, making love is not separate from making life, sexual acts are not separated from love. Third, some contraceptives as pills are abortive; they kill the seeds of the life.

The Mormon Church allows the use of contraception after marriage and for the Evangelical church the use of modern contraceptives is not sanctioned before and after of the marriage. Regarding the use of condoms, all the churches representatives warned to avoid a trivialization of sexual relations and promiscuity through the promotion of the use of condoms to prevent pregnancies or the transmission of VIH and ITS. In addition, for the Catholic

Church, to which belong most of the youth in Ayacucho, condoms are not recomended because they separate sex from procreation.

Religion as a Resource

In Chapters 4 and 5 I will analyze in detail how youth interact and negotiate with these religious narratives about sexuality, here my focus is on the relationship of youth with the church, which include religious motivations but goes beyond of them. In her study of official health systems in a Bolivian village, Crandon-Malamud (1993) said that official religion is also a resource for accessing to public spaces and expanding social networks. In the case of girls, who have more restrictions to go out than boys do, this resource proves to be useful when negotiating walks and more time away from home. The Catholic parishes and the Mormon and Evangelical churches are spaces for encounter and youth organization. The motivations to attend activities organized by the churches are varied and often intertwined, including: their own religious faith instilled by the family, interest in subjects and courses taught at church, the desire to meet other girls and boys, being attracted by some catechists or preachers, accompanying their closest friends, participating in musical activities, excursions and other forms of entertainment, developing some social skills, like learning to talk in public and gain leadership regarding other youth. It is also a way to find new meaning in their lives, as Blanca, a 16 year-old girl, said when she explained about the community work currently being undertaken by her parish youth group (tree-planting campaigns, ensuring streets cleanliness, preventing substance abuse among adolescents, etc.). For Roy, a 19 year-old boy, his efforts to become a catechist were part of his attempt to fight against alcohol addiction and

a personal quest to find meaning in life. He met his current girlfriend at the parish and after some time, he left the parish. At present, he defines himself as an existentialist and is not affiliated with any religion. After leaving the parish group, Roy participated in a group of boys who liked metal and gothic. For Jimmy, the evangelical church he belongs to since he was 9 years old is the place where he learned to cope with sadness and loneliness, and not to lose hope. Now, he organizes recreational activities for children:

> Jimmy: I remember we belonged to the neighborhood, yes, we all played together and one day a lady came, and she was the one who built the church. She would gather us every Sunday and talk to us, and I do not know how some of us started to like these meetings and thought it was fun, and in this way we would learn everything about the Bible and the comparison with our daily life, all of that. Some did not like it, we went there every Sunday and those who believed were those who stayed.
> Carmen: And what is the main reason for you to stay?
> Jimmy: By reading the Bible you learn a lot, there you find advice, as when we are in a sad moment, we can always count on our friend who is God, we must never lose hope, there are many things that have been useful for me.
> Carmen: And what do you do now?
> Jimmy: We sing for a while, and then read the Bible, and talk about activities we can do to support children. We go camping; organize short excursions or campfires, some little contests, some games, like sack races.

In the case of the Mormon girl, Kimberly, the motivations were similar to those outlined above. She was attracted by the social and learning space that the Mormon Church offered her. In addition, she was impressed by local infrastructure. The Mormon Church in Huamanga is in front of the Alameda, a very attractive place to stroll, full of lush trees and places where teenagers and young people have space to meet, rehearse dances or play. Unlike the parishes, the building of this church is new and freshly painted. It is a building that symbolizes modernity and certain opulence.

> Kimberly: My aunt is from Ica. Seven years ago, all right [*ya pues*], since I was on vacation, for around four months, [I stayed] there at her home, she took me to the Mormon Church every Sunday, and I liked it. There are activities, sports, performances, very nice.
> Carmen: Did you like the activities?
> Kimberly: Yes, and besides, they teach you, they also talk to you pe '.
> Carmen: What do they talk to you about?
> Kimberly: We should take care of our body, our body is a temple and obviously they are not saying "no no, no, no," they say that we must have it [sexual relations] at the proper time.
> Carmen: What about the Mormon Church in Ayacucho, what do you like most?
> Kimberly: The values, activities such as theater, the ordinances, the buildings
> Carmen: What values for example, do you consider the most important?
> Kimberly: Obedience, for example.
> Carmen: Obedience to whom?
> Kimberly: To your parents, to God. Yes, they say we will have a long life.

As one of the leaders of the sexual health advocators pointed out, churches offer some attractive opportunities for teenagers, so why should they not take advantage of these opportunities? This is Chela, a 16 year-old girl:

> Topics they address are very interesting and since I have been formed by my family, I am quite Christian, I believe in God very much. And I think that the fact that I can also manage myself in public, or the fact that when they taught me something, that excited me and I liked it and said: “Why not take advantage of the opportunity, right?” So last year I got prepared for my Confirmation, I knew about the issue and accepted, not being a catechist, but assistant. I like this thing about managing myself, and everything, and took it as an opportunity, the fact of becoming a catechist or catechizing, teaching what they taught me and I took it with this meaning, right? Since I received my confirmation last year, because it was something like mandatory and I took that opportunity, as I’ve just mentioned.

Finally, religious celebrations offer to youth leisure spaces or they have secularized them. Since colonial times,[24] the activities organized by the Catholic Church follow religious

[24] According to Peruvian historian Miriam Salas de Coloma (1998), religious feasts and temples emerged in the sixteenth century in Ayacucho with both religious and secular purposes. The aim was to set days in the calendar to reflect and strengthen the worship through ritual, as well as to gain new adherents to the Christian faith. At the same time, the purpose was to provide the indigenous workers

and secular purposes and are mixed with expressions of fun and joy, not only with suffering, guilt and forgiveness. The constraining religious narrative about body and sexuality contrasts with the secularization of religious fests and other activities where young people participate. Currently, religious celebrations in Ayacucho and surrounding areas where adolescents come from result in the major local festivals, mostly important because of their significance, number of days involved and massive attendance. With the exception of carnival, there is no similar secular party. The two most important religious holidays are Holy Week in Huamanga, celebrated in April, and the feast of the Lord of Maynay in Huanta, held in September. Huanta is just about an hour and a half from the city of Huamanga (Ayacucho) by public transportation. Some of the interviewees and their friends were born or have relatives in Huanta. Both festivals attract many local and foreign visitors (especially Easter). These feasts are well attended by young people mostly because they are meeting spaces with fairs and festive activities, such motivation is more important than religious devotion.

The celebration of Easter is the most important and crowded event in the city of Huamanga and one of its main attractions. For the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, Easter is primarily a commemoration and representation of the final days of Jesus on earth, through his death and resurrection. In 2010, in addition to the representation of Jesus' death usually played by adult and youth groups in Ayacucho, there was a performance played by children. The latter was prepared by a school motivated motivated by the 400th anniversary of the presence of Catholic Church in Ayacucho ("Jubilee"). On the other hand, for most

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with comfort and entertainment to prevent violent social explosion due to the harsh working conditions. Accordingly, commemorative dates were established: the celebration day of the patron saint of the mill to protect the mill and its workers, the day of virgins and patron saints of several trades, special dates in the life of Jesus on Earth and commemoration of all situations involving the different stages of life (Marzal, 1988; Salas Coloma, 1998).

adolescents and young people interviewed, as for many local tourists who attend religious celebrations, the meaning of the Holy Week is to have several days off to meet, walk, drink and be merry. Besides, Easter provides meeting spaces and non-religious events organized during this time, such as the *Pascua Toro* (Easter Bull). The *Pascua* Toro o *Jala Toro* takes place on Holy Saturday, before the commemoration of Christ's Ascension. Similar to the *Fiesta de San Fermin* in Spain, this is an event in which bulls are pulled by riders from one part of the city (Alameda Valdelirios), to where the crowd is waiting (Plaza de Armas). This event gathers many teenagers and young people, some of whom have been grouped together into "*Jalatoros*" associations. They wear red T-Shirts and compete to see which group builds the highest human tower. Before and after the bull's arrival, a number of situations give boys and girls the opportunity to interact with each other, including locals and tourists. Before the bull appears, adolescents and youngsters gather around the *Plaza de Armas* (Main Square) where they attempt to build their human towers, talk, make jokes and drink liquor in groups. After the bull enters the main square bands play and all attendees join the *arascasca*, dance in which participants move arm in arm. This all-night-long party continues until the next day, when the Risen Christ leaves the Cathedral of Huamanga. Other activities related to the Eastern are the Acuchimay fair, family and disco parties, bonfires and performances of bands and orchestras. This is the reason why teens call the Holy Week "*La Semana Tranca*" or "*La Semana Huasca*" (both *tranca* and *huasca* refer to drinking alcohol until getting drunk), as it is called in Lima and other cities of Peru. Thus, religious activities are spaces for expression and strengthening of faith, and at the same time, offer forms of socialization and social exchange that are secularized by the motivations and practices of youth.

Educational Institutions and Catholic Sexual Education

The public educational institutions where my informants studied have a strong influence of the Catholic religion, as it also happens in Lima (See León 2013). Since the colonial period, Catholic religious orders have played a significant role in the Peruvian education (Zapata et al. 2008). In the state schools where participants studied there was a strong presence of the Catholic iconography, doctrine and prescriptions. Two of the largest schools where most of the interviewees studied have religious names[25], which for confidentiality purposes, I will call here: San Marcos School for boys and girls, and Virgen del Rosario School, only for girls (formerly administrated by nuns). These religious figures (San Marcos and Virgen del Rosario) are the patron saints of these schools and they were frequently invoked or celebrated as it is assumed that these patron saints have a special sympathy for members of these educational institutions. The most important celebrations in public schools, including the anniversary of the founding of the school, used to begin with a compulsory mass. Pictures with the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Virgin Mary or Christ Crucified, were common in classrooms, staff room and the principal's office, and some passages of the Bible were also posted on the walls. Religious Education (Roman Catholic) was a mandatory subject, as it was in the rest of the country, so only students who profess other faiths were usually exempted from studying this core subject[26]. Additionally, teachers used to give advice on sexuality – in formal or informal settings – with references to Catholic moral doctrine and

[25] Other public schools are named after Independence heroes, such as José Faustino Sánchez Carrión, General Sucre or Los Libertadores (The Liberators, José de San Martín and Simón Bolívar, who led the final Wars of Independence).

[26] The law of religious freedom was promulgated on December 2010, but there is not research about how this law is currently implemented in state schools.

mandates. Moreover, educational institutions organized and prepared students in the process of religious upbringing for Catholics. The schools co-organized with local parishes the preparation meetings for the First Holy Communion (usually 10-11 years old) and Confirmation (usually 15-16 years old). Both rituals involved a preparation program that lasts almost the entire school year and includes weekly sessions at the parish center, as well as one-day retreats or longer spiritual retreats. These meetings served to learn about the Catholic doctrine and related it with issues of the everyday life of youth, including sexuality.

During my fieldwork I observed the duality of feelings of several girls and boys towards the mandatory character of religious activities, such as the attendance to mass or the Confirmation preparation sessions. They hardly had any option but to attend, although many of them were not entirely convinced. Confirmation was recommended by the Religion teacher (who is sometimes a nun or a priest) and in some cases, it was part of the mandatory activities of the course. In one of the schools, girls held attendance cards that had to be sealed or signed by the catechists at the parish sessions. The students told me that their teacher reviewed the cards and graded them according to their attendance to the parish. Some students and a teaching assistant responsible for the Tutoring and Educational Guidance Area (TOE) in a state school confirmed that the religion teacher (a nun) had shown preference for students who attended catechism parish activities. Additionally, some adolescents who initially did not want or were not sure about Confirmation, finally went through it so they would not be the exception among their classmates.

These conflicts or disagreements among some youth regarding compulsory religious activities in the school were barely present among teachers who were convinced about the

need and advantages of the articulation between the Catholic Church and the schools. For teachers (and parents) the close relation of schools with the Catholic religion was needed to offer to children a comprehensive training as human beings, “who not only need knowledge but also values”, under the understanding that these values can only or mainly come from the religion. In the next paragraphs I will show how sexual education was significantly shaped by Catholic religion in public schools of Ayacucho.

Sexual Education in State-Funded Schools

With some exceptions, the narrative of teachers about sexuality and gender was significantly influenced by their Catholic beliefs. They reproduced gender inequalities regarding sexual agency of girls and emphasized meanings of femininity that give woman a moral value according to her sexual behavior. The main referent of this narrative was the “*decente*” or “*digna*” (decent) woman, which is an ideal promoted by Catholics catechists and also by representatives of other churches. In addition to the Catholic discourse, teachers referred to biological and social differences of gender. Values were related to responsibilities and not to rights, placing emphasis on women because of two reasons. The first reason is the assumption that men, and male adolescents in particular, have uncontrollable desires that are more difficult to regulate than in the case of females. The second is that boys have less to lose, what is often summarized in the phrase: "a man is a man" or "a man always lands on his feet" (“*el hombre siempre cae parado*”).

Teachers were more explicit than catechists, priest and nuns, regarding how to put in practice Catholic teaching on sexual morality, as I could observe and heard in my interviews with both youth and teachers. Teachers’ narratives supported the idea that the main virtues

and responsibilities of girls are to control their sexual desires and to be modest regarding issues related to romantic relationships and sexual partners. Although some of these teachers agreed with gender equity in educational and labor opportunities, most of them considered that in issues of sexuality it should be different. Some female teachers assumed that in most cases boys are the ones who tempt girls so they reminded girls that a decent girl "should not be available for boys." This view is discussed in Religious Education classes and reinforced in other subjects with contents about sexuality and gender relations, such as in the classes of Person, Family and Human Relationships and Tutoring and Educational Guidance. Blanca (17 years old), who attended a public school for women, told me how her teacher of Person, Family and Human Relations advised girls to act passively in relation to males as a way to cultivate virtue and not be exposed to social sanction:

> The teacher of Person and Family told us: "You have to have…. What is it called? Virtue. For example, when it comes to confessing our feelings to a boy, or when the boy declares his feelings for a girl, I mean, the boy should confess his love to you first, not you. "It looks bad, you are ladies," she said. (Blanca)

The influence of the Catholic Church over schools has very direct implications for the contents of sexual education taught in the classrooms as well as for the scientific information about sexual desire, contraception, HIV and other themes that were ignored. This has influence on the level governmental institutions in charge of educational policies, and the level of teachers and principals from local educative institutions. In 1996, the National Sex Education Program for 1996-2000 – first of its kind in Peru– was designed,[27] following the

[27] The first precedent of sex education as a responsibility of the Peruvian State is the National Program of Education in Population 1980-1990, run by the Ministry of Education. This program developed actions with a population approach and to face poverty. During this period, contents related to: family

guidelines and recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo (1994). The Guidelines to implement this program were the result of a dialogue between the specialists who drew up the program and the experts (including experts from universities and feminist organizations), and were also validated by a group of teenagers. Conservative sectors of the Catholic Church objected to them, arguing that such guidelines addressed "controversial" issues like abortion, sexual orientation, masturbation, among others. Opposition to these contents resulted in the re-edition of the guidelines. The new version was given a more conservative emphasis and took away various issues formerly included in the original guidelines that were judged as inadequate or controversial since they could incite "unconventional sexual behavior" or promiscuity (Arias and Bazan, 2006). During the period from 2001 to 2005, sex education ceased to be a national program and became a subject within the Psychopedagogical Prevention[28] Area [*Area de Prevencion Psicopedagogica*], under the responsibility of the Tutoring and Integral Prevention Office of the Peruvian Ministry of Education. In 2005, the Ministry of Education approved the National Curriculum Design, which includes sexual education issues as cross-curricular themes, basic contents of the curriculum areas for subjects such as: Person, Family and Human Relationships, Social Sciences and Science, Technology and Environment; and as a topic of the psycho-pedagogical prevention area within the Tutoring and Educational Guidance

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and human sexuality, responsible parenthood, child rights, sexual identity and gender identity, family planning and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, were incorporated into the Secondary Curriculum Design. Similarly, between 1985 and 1989, a seminar on population education was incorporated into the teachers' curriculum (Ministry of Education 2008).

[28] Prevention has been focused on drugs´ addictions, participation in gangs and pregnancy of youth (Ministry of Education 2008).

(Ministry of Education 2008). Official documents included both the Church's emphasis on family values and love (although this focus is not exclusive to the church) as well as some of the approaches promoted by international conferences and development agencies that fund State social programs. Cross-curricular themes included: "Education for love, family and sexuality education; education for gender equality; education for citizenship, peace and living together; education on human rights; values and ethics education; intercultural education and environmental education" (Ministry of Education 2008: 15).

The mainstreaming of sex education remained at the general level of official regulations and little was done to implement it. A study conducted by the Ministry of Education in 2006 found that 60% of tutors considered that they were not trained to deal with sex education, did not feel comfortable talking about that, did not know how to deal with students of different ages, and they felt embarrassed or insecure. There were others who were not convinced that sex education should be taught. In addition, more than 50% of tutors considered they had no support materials or adequate time for tutoring sessions that include sexuality education issues (Ministry of Education 2008). It was only in 2008 that the Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education were developed and implemented in a small number of educational institutions with UNFPA support. In these guidelines, the Ministry of Education offers to implement a comprehensive sex education based on scientific grounds, from a gender, intercultural and human rights perspective (Ministry of Education 2008).

At the time fieldwork was carried out (August 2008-January 2010), the Ministry of Education´s policies on sexual education remained unknown to the majority of school

teachers in the city of Ayacucho, as it happened in other places of Peru (Huancavelica in the South-Andean area and Ucayali in the Amazonian region) where the local NGO in charge of the teen program in Ayacucho worked (see chapter 3). Sexual education was seen as external to educational institutions and mainly identified with the agenda of the NGO that advocated for its implementation in public schools. This idea was reinforced because the NGO was known by some teachers in Ayacucho for its work promoting feminism. The NGO proposal to provide full information to prevent non-desired pregnancies and HIV among teens, found the opposition of principals and teachers, with some exceptions. The opponents argued they needed to "teach values" (meaning Catholic virtues associated with control of sexuality) and promote abstinence as the main ways to prevent non-desired pregnancies. Addressing issues such as condom use and contraception in detail met the strongest opposition. The main argument was that providing this content to adolescents involved the risk of encouraging promiscuity and sexual initiation. At the same time, it was observed that part of the refusal to work with the NGO was associated with various teachers' discomfort and embarrassment when discussing sexuality issues, because as one teacher explained: "They have also been educated in this way, where sex is seen as taboo, dirty, as a sin." From the perspective of several interviewed teachers, many students know "even more than they do" in terms of sexuality, because the Internet allows teens to see "everything that they should not see" such as pornography. These teachers said they had to confront what boys and girls learn online by teaching values such as respect and dignity associated with religion.

In this way, the long relationships between the Catholic Church and the educational system in Peru and the Catholic religious affiliation of most of the teachers and principals,

contribute to both: a religious education and socialization in public schools (which include religious views about virginity, girls' sexual agency and contraception) and structural limitations to implement a broader and incipient sexual education program proposed by the state.

Media and Markets: Building the "Social Skin"

Soap operas, series, musical videos and, information about artists and advertisements were topics of daily conversation among youth; they influenced significantly their aesthetic trends, ideals about femininity and masculinity, and their expectations about consumption. Clothing and other goods advertised in the media or on fashion among their peers become in the "social skin" (Turner 1980) that youth used as part of the process of production of their body and "self" (Reisch and Koo 2004) and building both their individual and social identity (Hansen, 2004). For instance, wearing certain clothes was a way to seek inclusion or recognition as part of the group to which youth belongs or would like to belong to. Clothing was also a way to differentiate themselves from other girls or boys.

Social marks and ways of social equalization and differentiation on trendy clothes were observed in adolescents of both sexes, but they were especially noticeable in the case of girls. Several girls said that one of the reasons why they had decided to work was that their parents could not buy "their stuff," among which clothing and other accessories were mentioned as priorities. I carried out fieldwork for over 18 months and during that time I noticed that girls, no matter how much money they had, always tried to buy or borrow clothes according to the new trends, popular among their peers. I saw girls changing their clothing style when they attended parties or other special events: from classical to skinny jeans

(*pitillo*), from sweaters and jackets to small bolero jackets, and from tennis shoes to ballet-flats (*ballerinas*). I also noticed the gradual predominance of fuchsia and purple over other colors and the popularity of checkered scarves during the last period of my fieldwork. Among boys there has been less variation in clothing styles over time, although they were still concerned about wearing new clothes.

Miriam's account is particularly instructive regarding the significant influence of clothing in social interactions of youth, and its consequences for social integration or exclusion. Miriam was one of the sexual and reproductive health advocators with less economic resources. Her house had no roof but plastics, no light or running water. His father was a deliverer (*cargador*) in the market and she worked as a domestic worker. The money that she earned barely covers her food and sometimes she needed to make sacrifices buying less food to be able to save for their school supplies and clothing. To Miriam it was very obvious that the clothing she wore was a sign that denotes their status in the hierarchy of social classes in Ayacucho, between the *humildes* (humble) and *gente de plata* (wealthy people). At the same time, she considers that by changing her clothes she can get more social recognition in their daily relationships. When describing her short and medium term aspirations, she depicted very precise details about how she would like to dress, "with white boots, tight jackets and skirts, as I have seen young *bien vestiditas* (well dressed) ladies walking around the Town Centre." This accuracy contrasted the doubts she had about what she would like to study (perhaps secretarial or psychology) and her real possibilities to do that, since, so far, she could not attend a regular high school program but just study on weekends. The saying "as you look, you get treated" could be quoted more specifically,

according to Miriam's experience in this way: "depending on the way you are dressed, people take you into account or humiliate you." Miriam had a cousin the same age in another group of young promoters in a neighboring district where she lived who did not say hello to her and pretended not to know her when they meet in activities promoted by the NGO supporting young promoters in Ayacucho. Miriam attributed it to the fact that she was humilde (poor) and wears "humble clothes." She told me:

> It is because the times I have seen him, I was humbly dressed, in a track suit and wearing tennis shoes. He does not talk to me because he has seen me dressed this way. But, for example, if I were someone beautiful, with money, very pretty, well dressed; I know that he would call me 'cousin'.

Miriam usually went to the NGO meetings wearing the light blue sport pants she wore to school. On the other hand, other girls got trendy jeans and T-shirts, making special efforts to show their best clothes on the day the group met up with promoters from other places or when they had an extraordinary event (beyond the regular weekly sessions). Miriam's cousin had also a low socioeconomic status, but he would be in a better position than she is, and, above all, "he goes there well dressed" with new jeans and T-shirt (or apparently new), with trendy colors, purple, green or black. Obviously, trendy clothing did not eliminate social inequalities among adolescents but, apparently, it set other differences related to social status. In the experiences reported in this study, dressing better favored more equal treatment and integration in peer groups.

Sexy, Modern and Rebellious Girls

Media and markets expanded in the last decade in Ayacucho (see Chapter 2) have disseminated gender identities and lifestyles that contrast with those promoted by the Catholic

Church, schools and parents in Ayacucho city, particularly those emphasizing girls' modesty and lack of sexual agency. Among girls, the most common aesthetic ideals were famous singers and actress from Latin America and the USA, and in some cases, from India and Corea, who come out on the media, as well as in clothing and makeup catalogs. Among them are singers such as Shakira (Colombian), Rihanna (Barbadian), and Katy Perry (North-American). Some Mexican actress and singers, such as the Mexicans Dulce María Espinoza and Anahí Puente from the RBD pop group (actress of the soap opera Rebelde about a teenagers' boarding school), Thalia (actress of soap operas where she represented a poor girl from the outskirts of Mexico) and Kate del Castillo (the main actress in a series about a young Mexican woman who becomes the most powerful drug trafficker in southern Spain) were popular because girls' identification with their roles in soap operas. These media stars have in common a "sexy" look, meaning that they are physically attractive and desirable. In addition, girls highlighted their identification with these female artists because they found rebellion, audacity, eroticism, transgression or disinhibition in their performances, dances, song lyrics or roles they represent. Likewise internet web pages offer images and thoughts that girls reproduced in their Facebook pages because identification or sympathy with phrases about women's autonomy and gender equity, such as: "Women: neither submissive nor devoted. I love a beautiful, free and crazy women" or: "Treats me like a queen and I will treat you like a king. Play with me, and I will show you how to play." These ideas, expectations, trends, and images of masculinity and femininity transnationally spread by mass media and markets shaped youth referents of identity in different ways, however there was not a deterministic and univocal influence.

The relationship between the mass media (local or transnational products disseminated by media) and personal preferences of the adolescents from Ayacucho was significantly mediated by their peer dynamics, forms of balance, and social differentiation, as well as by the features of local and national markets accessible for them. Thus, transnational trends did not have the same success in different social groups and spaces attended by teenagers. These trends were, in turn, forms of distinction between them, a way of seeking identity and originality. In addition, transnational products were adapted according to available local resources, tastes and aspirations. Some examples are described below.

For girls being sexy was assumed as a consubstantial dimension of beauty and modernity, and it was expressed mainly in the language of clothing and grooming the body. The terms “to be well dressed” or “dress up (well)” were associated by girls with fashion and modernity, as well as with good taste, “to wear beautiful and modern clothing,” “to wear trendy clothing,” “to wear new clothing” and “to be able to combine or choose well.” When describing these “beautiful” and “trendy” clothes, girls mentioned that it was tight-fitting (*ropa pegadita*") and some of the girls remarked it was “sexy clothing,” which highlights, shows or suggests their physical attributes, like a pair of “shorts” or “a miniskirt and a top.” These ideas about what is fashionable are related with images spread by the media (mainly on TV) and the products (clothing and accessories) offered by different markets, which propose models of femininity that give great importance to the fact of being in shape and "sexy-looking.” Among girls, I can distinguish those who were considered to be more flashy or daring in the group, who ware deeper necklines or shorter skirts. Another group of girls were the so-called *alucinadas* (“big-headed”) or “fashion girls,” who ware trendy models that were

not common or affordable among adolescents, such as a combination of shorts, black pantyhose and long boots. Elegant (with good taste to combine cloths) and beautiful girls according to mass media patterns but without committing “excesses” or “exagerations,” were called “*regias*.” Girls who used long skirts and high-necked blouses were perceived as conservative and called "nuns" because their association with a religious narrative and style. Other girls were simply considered *descuidadas* as they did not take care about the fashion or the grooming of their body.

Whereas among the girls tight clothing (*ropa pegadita*), associated with sexy, “beautiful” or modern, is common; among the boys, at least two styles were popular. There were those who follow the rebellious look of the local *manchas* or “gangs” inspired in a Hip hop style. They ware loose t-shirts and pants or shorts (but not as loose as in the U.S.), and a flipped cap. On the other hand, there were those who wear classic jeans and classic T-shirts or shirts, usually with a distinctive design. Thus, clothing tends to reinforce gender divisions and models in which femininity is associated with the body’s beauty and sensuality, while the male is related to roughness (associated with the Hip hop style), the countercultural or rebellious character of youth cultures, or the prestige of the clothing brand (even though everyone knows that what they wear is “fake” or a replica).

However, the desire to have fashionable clothing and to purchase was not necessarily due to direct consumption of music or television products. The main filters of this “offer” of gendered or sexualized images and goods, as well as the available and affordable products in the markets, were the teens’ peer groups that consider this to be meaningful. Many teens’ social time was shared with other teens or young people when they meet at their educational

institution (college, academy, university or technical institute), at any entertainment space, or at their youth group ("urban tribes" or "youth cultures") meet-ups. Products or styles young people aspire to have were usually those that had been seen and valued among their friends or acquaintances, which are limited by the local market that did not offer many options affordable for girls. At parties and meetings, it was common to see several teenagers in a group wearing slight variations of the same model of a blouse, sweater or ballet-flats. These models were, at the same time, popular in the streets and on stalls along streets around the local market and nearby. Nevertheless, the available clothing was good enough to make a slight difference among the trendy girls. Although models of femininity, and aesthetic ideas about sensuality and modernity were inspired in media stars, peers were the main referent to perceive who did a "exaggerate" demonstration of sensuality or extravagancy, or what were the limits between being *descuidada* or nun, or what defines a *regia* girl.

Besides, the important value that adolescents in Ayacucho gave to trendy products and images propagated by the mass media (their link to transnational markets and cultures), did not deny their close relationship with Andean culture manifestations and some of the customs brought from the countryside to urban areas. The dynamism and diversity of cultural hybridity processes in Huamanga, where local cultures coexist with national and transnational flows, has led anthropologist Ludwig Huber to qualify it as "a city as hybrid and segmented as its habitants' social behavior" (Huber 2002: 52, my translation). Among adolescents, Andean culture was present in some of their music preferences and entertainment spaces, particularly in local and regional festivals. At the same time, youth avoided indigenous and rural markers such as traditional clothing and Quechua language. Likewise, there was the

intention to be differentiated by gender culture and norms associated with rural areas where their parents or grandparents come from. Especially girls, highlighted differences between their mothers and grandmothers based on their access to higher levels of a formal education, their position against violence at any circumstance, their possibility of freely hanging out even if they have to lie to do it, and their power of decision-making regarding their outfit even though it may create conflicts between their parents. Artistic expressions of Andean origin and typical festivities of Ayacucho also provided languages and spaces for teens to express themselves and have fun, as it happens with transnational cultural products and mass media.

The sexy-girl model also influenced the costume and choreography of the Andean dances in Ayacucho Carnivals (*Carnavales*), the most important secular and traditional fest in this region. The typical women's clothing consists of a high-necked blouse with a *lliclla* or blanket over the shoulders, and a *pollera* or long skirt (below the knees) used with underskirts underneath. Some groups of young women did not wear underskirts but a red or pink miniskirt with black laces or a bikini and innovated the choreography to lift their long Andean skirts and show their modern sexy garments underneath. Likewise, Carnival troupes used to include messages with sexual content, but youth groups, unlike the others, were the only who explicitly addressed the use of contraceptives and condoms in two of the carnivals (2009 and 2010) I attended. One of these youth groups belonged to Universidad Nacional San Cristobal de Huamanga (UNSCH), and another group gathered youth advocatess (trained on sexual and reproductive health by the feminist NGO Jóvenes Huamanguinas). These contents were introduced by these institutions as part of carnival parades and were relatively new to the public or unexpected within the carnival context. Returning to Laumman and colleagues

(2004), local feasts from Andean and colonial origin, are also sexualized spaces and so become part of the market of potential partners for the teenagers, as it is for adults. In addition, youth incorporated their "modern" outfits (as during the Carnivals), forms of enjoyment (as it happened during Holy Week) and ways of speaking about sex.

Transnational mass media and markets have disseminated a model of femininity that emphasizes sensuality, which influenced significantly femininity models shared by youth in urban Ayacucho under the language of modernity and through clothing and grooming the body. This desirable girl was also admired because their agency to transgress adult restrictions or overcome social obstacles (poverty, marginalization and discrimination) with courage, as it is show in plots of popular soup operas. At the same time, the world of media and consumption was importantly mediated by the peer groups of youth.

Peers and Youth Cultures: "They May Replace Your Family"

Adolescents have developed their own mechanisms of integration, social equalization and models of identity within their peer groups, including their classmates, the "manchas" or gangs (Strocka 2008), as well as various youth cultures that have music and clothing as their main axis (Huber, 2002). As part of the anti-establishment discourse of some youth cultures, their members question the political and cultural power of the Catholic Church and reject restrictions and inequalities related to gender and sexuality. This study also reveals a kind of sexual and gender culture of peers whose expressions are described and analyzed in the following chapters. Peer groups are privileged spaces for the production of youth cultures or youth "micro-cultures" (Feixa, 1988). In this text I understand youth culture to mean

"practices associated with age-based cultures, but also those that locate young people as other kinds of cultural agents" (Bucholtz 2002: 525-526). Peer groups that are most relevant in the lives of the adolescents I interviewed and observed were formed after they met at school and in some cases, in the neighborhood. These were spaces where several youth have been meeting up every day ever since their childhood; and where they have been developing strong bonds of friendship and fellowship, sharing secrets, activities and interests. The school as a place full of cultural production and adolescents' resistance has been studied by several authors, including the classic ethnographies of Paul Willis (1977) and Angela McRobbie (1977). Golte and Leon (2010), in their study on schoolgirls in Lima, talk about a school counterculture. This counterculture has been built in opposition to the education provided at school and it shows the generational gap between adolescents' experiences and ideals, and those of their parents and teachers who instill restraint and discipline in the girls. In my study, I have found both ruptures and continuities in the fields of gender relations and sexuality, which are related to rules and purposes instilled or disseminated by adults and institutions such as school, family and Christian churches (see Chapters 4 and 5).

Peers, as well as being groups that share symbols, codes and spaces, have also become affective communities that provide emotional, social and, sometimes, material support. These friendships have been strengthened or expanded in other activities that contribute to their union, which are organized for example by the Unique Front of High School Students of Ayacucho (FUESA) or the group of youth advocates for sexual and reproductive health. One of the boys lived with some of his former schoolmates while his family was away in the jungle of Ayacucho. This was a way of supporting each other as they were facing family

conflicts. They would share their “philosophy” and preferences for metal and gothic music. Among girls, it is common to see expressions of affection and friendship between them, both face-to-face and on virtual basis. Some of them would seem to be jealous because of other friends, someone’s boyfriend or best friend. These are significant affections and ways of demonstrating solidarity and loyalty, which according to some teenagers “replace your family”: they find company, support and understanding, whereas with their parents they do not feel the same. In chapter 7, I explain how peer relationships are important for the prevention of unwanted pregnancy and other sexual risks, as well as for the prevention of romantic deception.

Social norms, spaces of interaction and cultural codes of the peer groups differentiates the interviewed boys and girls from their parents, teachers and other adults who hold other views and have other ways of interaction. Youth references and emphasis vary in several aspects, including: experiences of exclusion and control in their relationships with significant adults, students union and political organizations influenced by Marxism, the consumer culture and mass media, transnational youth cultures related to music and clothing, among others. However, most of them shared a basic common language and codes for certain issues, such as interacting with adults, gender and sexuality. Likewise, most of them have participated in spaces and entertainment activities reserved for teens, like playing “spin the bottle” or attending certain clandestine bars or discos. In general terms, I might distinguish a sort of common urban youth culture and differentiated cultures among adolescents in urban Ayacucho, which are created and recreated through daily interactions.

Mancheros, Metal, Gothic, Hip Hop and Others

There are heterogeneous youth groups in Ayacucho that have specific demands, or share ideologies, symbols and aesthetics that gather them and turn them into communities, groups or organizations. As it happens with various youth cultures in the world (see: Hedbige 1979; Feixa 1988), in Ayacucho, they express identities, rejection or protest through style and aesthetics, including music, gestures, poses, clothing, words, and other forms of differentiation,. These lifestyles are located in leisure spaces and within the interstitial spaces of institutional life, as Feixa pointed out (1988). According to this author, style is the "symbolic manifestation of youth cultures, expressed in a, more or less coherent, set of tangible and intangible assets that young people consider representative to their identity as a group." Thus, these youth cultures are located more in the sphere of identity rather than in the arena of social movements (Boullon, 1992), although, some of them intersect at some levels with social movements or take some ideas and symbols from the organizations leading them, such as the Marxism or Feminism among youth in Ayacucho. *Mancheros* or youth gang members represent the most visible and extended youth culture in Ayacucho. Youth gangs emerged in the middle of 1990 associated with processes of social exclusion and everyday violence experiences undergone by adolescents from rural areas and slums of Ayacucho (Vergara, 2007, Strocka, 2008). Strocka suggests that contrary to what is said (mostly by journalists, local authorities and adults) about youth gangs in Ayacucho, these have not been formed to commit crimes. She shows that these youth gangs work as a strategy for adolescents and young people to survive and achieve a positive social identity in an environment of social exclusion, inequality and daily violence. In agreement with other

studies (Vergara 2007), this author also showed that teens join youth gangs seeking protection from other gangs, and find not only protection but also social and emotional support to overcome violent situations in their homes. Members of youth gangs usually wear baggy clothing and a hip hop stylish hat, adopting fashion from characters on TV series and computer games. Sometimes they steal money in order to buy clothes or tennis shoes that identify *mancheros* and are part of a global urban youth culture (Strocka 2008: 132-133). They combine this outfit with wooden garment accessories in Andean designs and they listen to chicha music.[29] Strocka's youth gang mapping for 2004, found 35 active youth gangs and about a thousand members in total. These youth gangs were mostly composed of men aged between 15 and 20 years old, many of whom were children of rural migrants. In earlier periods there were exclusive female youth gangs but after, the female youth gangs often consisted of gang members' girlfriends and their link to these groups was weak.

Even though youth gangs were part of the social and cultural context in which my informants live, none of them currently belonged to the "*manchas*." For adolescents who participated in the study, youth gang members were part of the everyday social environment; they made friends directly or got to know them through friends or acquaintances from school or the neighborhood. Some of the girls' suitors were *mancheros* or had friends who were *mancheros*. They were also "the other" dangerous people that some boys and girls must beware of, in order to avoid robberies or fights with adverse consequences. But above all, arguments and advice from parents and teachers, particularly in the case of girls, took youth

[29] Chicha is a Peruvian musical genre that combines huayno and cumbia (Colombian) and emerged from the urban experiences of Andean migrants settled in Lima (Quispe, 2000). They identify themselves with chicha songs because they reflect their own life experience, for example migration from rural to urban areas (Strocka, 2008: 132-133).

gang's danger as a central issue. Boys were also advised but it was assumed that "men are better prepared to face dangers in the street since they are stronger." These adults frequently mentioned youth gangs as the reason why girls should return home early or should not stay for a long period of time in the streets. Youth gang members represented the unwanted otherness, dangerously close to their children. Some of the adults called their sons and daughters *pandilleros* (young gangsters) when they got involved in "risk-taking behaviors," e.g., hanging out in the streets, going to bars, drinking too much alcohol or bad manners (rude behavior, cursing, disrespect, aggressiveness). Hence, both adults and teens talked about the *medio pandilleros* (semi gangsters), who did not belong to a gang but still had a behavior associated with young gangsters. The study hold by Strocka, found that youth gangsters overact and overdo attitudes and behaviors which are common among boys and girls from their neighborhood. For example, they are used to hanging around doing nothing (*hacer hora*), skipping classes, and drinking alcoholic beverages. The difference is that young gangsters participate in street fights between groups and some criminal activities.

Other youth cultures in Ayacucho are inspired by youth cultures originated in the U.S. and Europe, such as metal, gothic, hip hop and emo, which they know by internet or by their friends in Ayacucho or Lima. Music and aesthetics in their personal look are important elements of identification that express a particular philosophy that rebels against the existing social order ("the system") and distinguishes them from other youths. However, not all of the youths who identified with any of these cultures associate them with a particular ideology. The most important aspect highlighted by my informants was their own identification with "the look," music and some symbols of a particular culture. This was the way they felt

different and emotionally connected. The youth advocates involved in some of these cultures called them in the same way: "cultures," and also used the terms "scenes" or *movidas* (new waves), common in other Latin American contexts to refer to the set of practices and dynamics that give life to particular cultural styles (see, for example, Villanueva 2008). The following testimony of Elvis (a 19 year-old boy) illustrates the process of his involvement in different transnational youth cultures and the relevance of Internet as a means to expand his cultural world, which is much larger than the local context of Ayacucho or Lima.

> Carmen: So, you say that you surfed the net looking for something different …
> Elvis: Yes, looking for unusual things, things that most people do not look for. People told me: "You are crazy. How are you going to do it?" Well, that was the first concept I had, I liked things that were not common, not because I wanted to be different, but because I was attracted to them. And there wasn't either a person who talked me into it or who provided me with information about it so that I would get involved. Because had it been that way, I believe, I might have followed that person at that moment, but at the same time I would have thought: "If I am going to be someone else's copy, I won't progress and sooner or later I will get stuck." However as time went by, I realized that I was more and more interested in this genre, known as the "underground scene," which is metal, and I was involved in it, for a long time, for about 3 or 4 years.
> Carmen: Since when?
> Elvis: Since I was 13 or 14, I think.
> Carmen: At that time, ¿Was metal music popular in Ayacucho?
> Elvis: It wasn't. I didn't see any headbangers in Ayacucho then.
> Carmen: And how did you get in touch with people involved in metal?
> Elvis: I'd say through internet, and since I didn't have enough money to buy books and stuff, all I could afford was the internet so, as I liked to listen to a specific genre of music, I started searching, and eventually I was surfing here and there, until I found "metal", but only their music, not their philosophical approach. And I was into metal for about 3 or 4 years until I began to dig a little deeper and realized that metal was not for me. I started to search about its life philosophy and everything, and I would say that metal is like extremism, drinking, smoking, women, wasting your life.

As part of the rejection of the system and a claim for difference acknowledgment, several of these youth questioned gender and generational hierarchies and discrimination based on sexual orientation. However, this criticism of the system coexisted, in some cases,

with existing sexual hierarchies. For instance, Elvis, one of the participants of the NGO workshop and a goth leader used classifications of normality/abnormality associated with heterosexuality/homosexuality, and derogatory words ("fags") to name men who feel sexually attracted to other men. He believes that there are limitations that gay men place on themselves because their lack of openness and "psychological preparation" for being gay. Thus, Elvis' criticism of the system inspired by goth ideology seems to coexist with existing sexual hierarchies and an ideology of individual progress fueled by personal aspirations and openness.

> Elvis: ... Why does the man have to be the boss? Why is he the one supposed to have the autonomy to say, damn it, I'm the father, the pillar of the house? Why not the mother? If she is the one who gives us life, so to speak, isn't she? Why not the children? Why not everybody in an equal way? Let's have no pillar, we all should be equal, instead of being a square, or a triangle, let's be a circle, we all are equal, aren't we? If a homosexual has decide to be the way he is, that is okay, let's leave him alone, that is his position, he wanted to be that way, without being influenced by anybody or by anything that was already established. So far, I only see stupid homosexuals, though.
> Carmen: Why stupid?
> Elvis: Stupid in the sense that they say they are different but that is not true. Ok, they can do whatever they want, but only if they demonstrate that they are psychologically prepared too, I mean, getting deeper into what they want to achieve. Here, in Peru, I think there are one or two gothics who are homosexual…dress like transvestites. They are from La Oroya. He's a boy but he dresses like a woman.
> Carmen: And why do you think they are not psychologically prepared?
> Elvis:Because it seems that their ideal… because every fag I've seen, or homosexual I saw around here, runs his beauty salon or is a hairdresser, I think that's their dream. I mean they do not want to progress.
> Carmen: Or perhaps, they do not have many other job opportunities, or maybe they really like being hairdressers?
> Elvis: That is the thing, but I once talked to them and they are narrow-minded, as if that were their own world and so they would die there. And, I realized that they might be worse than the so-called normal people.
> Carmen: Why?
> Elvis: Because a normal person sometimes can say: I do this because it is fashionable, because of this or that, they always have a dream, but homosexuals don't: "This is my world, well, they do not let me do that". Ok, they do not let you do that, so what? Does

> it mean it is over? You just leave it like that? I mean, no, no, no, it does not work that way. You are supposed to look for it, either they want you to do it or not, finding open doors or not you have to follow your dream, live for something, don't you? You should be willing to do something so that your life makes sense. My old man, my dad, he used to tell me "set impossible goals for yourself because along the journey you will achieve things you could have never imagined, but if you set a possible goal for yourself, you will reach it and get stuck there, while with the impossible goal will reach things that you would have never imagined."

The NGO and the New Gender and Sexual Rights Narratives

Together with the school and the parish, the NGO were one of the local institutions to which youth had established frequent relationships at some point in their lives. As part of the process of democratization of the country (see Chapter 2), NGOs had initiatives to promote the participation of teenagers and children with own voice for an improvement of their educational institutions and of state health programs (such as Tarea, Kallpa, Manuela Ramos, UNFPA, among others), and also to train youth for being involved in the participatory budgets of the municipalities (World Vision and UNICEF). Youth of urban Ayacucho have participated in different NGO projects and programs promoting their rights, including their sexual and reproductive rights. For my informants, the NGOs had become an alternative source of learning about sexuality and sexual health, gender equity, children rights, drug, social organizations, leadership and other issues not covered by the school and parishes.

Youth involved in this study started talking about sexual rights and health based on their participation in a project about sexual and reproductive health (2007-2009), conducted by a Peruvian feminist NGO that I call here by the pseudonym of Jóvenes Huamanguinas (JH). This NGO was created in Lima at the end of the 1970s by a group of Peruvian women involved in politics. In the context of the processs of restoring democracy after ten years of

military rule, these women reflected about their frustrations and expectations regarding the participation of women in political and social organizations. The aim of this NGO has been to advocate for gender equity for women, including different aspects of their legal, economic, social, political, and sexual and reproductive rights. JH started to work in these themes with women of urban slums in Lima and after expanded its projects to other regions of the Peruvian country with the finantial and technical support of European donors and other external funders. Together with other Peruvian NGOs, JH has worked in changing legal codes, in introducing women´s agendas in social policies and political parties, and in empowering women in periurban and rural areas through providing them tools for constructing new knowledge and developing abilities, strengthening their social organizations and improving their economic, political or educational opportunities.

The project in which my informants participated was different from other initiatives related to youth rights in Ayacucho mainly because of two reasons. The first was that they proposed a strategy that gave youth voice and prominence in a subject that was considered dangerous or restricted to adults, as it has been shown previously in this chapter: youth sexuality, the right to be informed and services that help prevent non desired pregnancies and AIDS. The second reason was that the NGO Jóvenes Huamanguinas supported community projects and let young promoters conduct them, in partnership with public health and education institutions. The latter challenged the adult-youth and professional-lay person (doctor- patient, teacher-student) hierarchies. The NGO also disseminated a public health discourse about prevention of early pregnancies, maternal mortality and HIV among youth. This kind of narrative was not as new and controversial as the sexual rights discourse. It was

supported by health care providers, some teachers and parents, and was often associated with ideas around progress since sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancies are linked to devastating effects on young people's health and social well-being. However, there was not an effective coordinated work with public health care services as it was planned, because the incipient work of the Peruvian health system in the field of the sexuality and sexual health of youth, and the lack of financial support and trained personnel in this area in most of the country (see Chapter 2). Thus, although the NGO strategy included adults´ sensibilization and institutional changes that could support their work with youth in Ayacucho, these processes did not work as expected.

Most of the interviewed boys and girls were participating in the NGO project about sexual and reproductive health for 2 or 3 years and say that they decided to become sexual and reproductive health advocators because the diverse opportunities that this project offers to them, such as: talking freely about themes hidden by their parents or addressed in a prescriptive or superficial way in school (e.g., the use of condom and contraceptive methods); learning for themselves and to teach their peers about important problems affecting youth, such as the prevention of non-desired pregnancies and HIV; learning to speak in public and being more confident about their abilities to teach and motivate others; belonging to a group and being acknowledged and respected by other youth and some adults. Youth discovered gradually the advantages of the views and methodologies of the NGO project, which offered them a more open and democratic approach to gender and sexuality than the school and parish:

> I think I spent two months and I did nothing, but then I got interested because the people of the project help as to understand little by little that speaking about sex is not

> bad, is not embarrassing, very different than in the parish or the school. After the workshops and my training as a *promotor* (an advocate), I no longer hid my face nor was laughing nervously when speaking of the sexual organs of man and woman, the condoms or issues like that. (Peter, 16 years old)
>
> The important thing is that they were open to all our ideas and fears, we could speak and there was not right or wrong opinion, which was very different at school! It was hard to believe in that, that some adults could allow us to speak in that way, and even they said that we could use our own words to disseminate information about pregnancies or the VIH. To be honest, at the beginning I did not trust completely in them, but I continued going to the meetings because they talked about teen pregnancy, and we are not free about that... I wanted to know how to prevent pregnancy and also wanted to teach others about that. (Lucía, 17 years old)

The theme of sexual pleasure was not absent in the first training sessions of youth advocators, particularly when they reflected about sexual initiation and sexual rights. However, this topic was barely addressed in youth community projects and peer work as they focused in the main reproductive or sexual health problem youth selected in the self-diagnostics: unplanned pregnancies among adolescents. The focus of the NGO strategy in health problems to design the community projects contribute to the silence about sexual pleasure during peer work. In addition, youth and especially girls, found extremely challenging and conflictive to speak about sexual pleasure because they could be accused of libertines by their peers and sanctioned by parents or teachers.

However, avoiding negative reactions and opposition of adults was not possible. The participatory methodology of the project and its focus on youth empowerment as citizens with rights, put these youth in conflictive situations with their parents, and particularly, with their school teachers and religious leaders. Youth have been questioned because their rights-approach to sexuality in in-class talks, video-forums and informative materials (prepared by them), exhibiting or carrying condoms for demonstration or personal use, and doing formal

requests as organized youth or students (e.g., signing the request of a classroom for organizing a talk, or mentioning their discontent for the absence of authorities in informative meetings organized by youth). Youth have been accused by some teachers and catechists of being used by the NGO as instruments to promote early sexual initiation and promiscuity, and of being disrespectful with adults. Maintaining ties with a feminist NGO and speaking in a language of sexual and reproductive rights in public activities was difficult for young people and particularly for women. This situation made the project particularly dependent on the constant advice and support of personnel of the NGO, who, for that reason, have kept some support to the organization of youth advocators after completion of the project in mid-year 2009.

The teachers and health care providers I interviewed were ambivalent about the language of rights promoted by NGOs and development agencies and sometimes used in the formulation of recent public policy for youth health and education (see Chapter 2). They agreed about some advantages of the right of youth to be informed about how to prevent sexual risks, but considered dangerous recognizing sexual rights of youth and called for a greater focus on adolescents' duties and responsibilities. Some teachers feared that participatory dynamics, the emergence of juvenile leaders and the dissemination of adolescents' rights would make them lose their authority. One teacher in charge of the Tutorial and Educational Orientation coursesaid: "Being too democratic confuses students." Other teacher mentioned: "If you say they have sexual rights it will be like saying 'you have the permission to have sex', 'you have the right to have sex', and adolescents are not at the age of have sex yet." In general terms, as illustrated along this study, in the daily lives of

youth, the discourse of rights was quite limited in the context of adult-teen relationships, which tend to be hierarchical at home and school. Parents and teachers expected to be respected for being older and having authority over youth, children or students, which basically implied obedience. Most of the time, teens did not agree with the expectations of this adult, but their reflection and nuisance were not usually shown in terms of lack of respect or recognition of their rights. Youths spoke in terms of rebellion, naughtiness and transgression. The rights discourse was more associated with public life and complaints against authorities. The troubled relationship with local authorities and the social protests are familiar to several adolescents who participated in the study both as observers because of school teachers' strikes and other popular demonstrations, and as members of the union of secondary students (FUESA) or members of the association of students' majors (AARLE). On the other hand, introducing the notion of rights associated with peers or with adolescents-adults relationships in everyday life events was an incipient process in urban Ayacucho. Even more challenging was the recognition of the sexual and reproductive rights of youth and particularly for girls, because the significant influence of the Catholic Church at school, families and public policy, which limited the right to have sexual relations to the heterosexual marriage and for reproductive purposes.

Asked about the most useful from the NGO project for their personal life, girls and boys said that it was speaking freely about sexuality and learning about the prevention of pregnancies and other issues related to their sexual health and rights. Framing sexual relationships as a right and result of a personal decision was particularly both conflictive and liberating for girls in urban Ayacucho. These girls had to defy gender norms and values that

consider female youth sexual initiation as the lost of women's dignity or a lack of responsibility deserving punishment, discourses that are constantly repeated by their school teachers and religious leaders. In the case of boys, the acknowledgment of women's rights, particularly their free self-expression, was importantly mediated by gendered ideas about an irrepressible masculine sexuality and a controlled female sexuality linked to their sexual reputation. At the same time, these boys critiqued the focus of the NGO in only sexual and reproductive rights. They considered this approach incomplete because the lack of access to other rights (e.g., education, health and economic rights) could hinder the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights.

Beyond Socialization

Research about the sexual socialization of youth has studied the influence of particular key socializing agents on youth sexual behaviors and is focused in the process by which youth learn and internalize specific values and norms (L'Engle and Jackson 2008; Chapin 2000; Luster and Small 1994; Resnick et al. 1997). An emphasis on the agents of socialization and the internalization of values and norms tends to highlight a unidirectional process of learning (youth learn from the agents of socialization) and neglect the worlds that children design by themselves for themselves (Waksler 1991). My approach to institutional actors influencing youth sexuality has a different focus, which is a negotiated relationship of youth with socializing agents, more than a unilateral process of transmission of norms and values. In this way, I follow research that questions a view of culture as heavily structured in established patterns (Rosaldo 1993) that people can only follow or reject, making an argument that is

similar to the one made convincingly by Jennifer Hirsch (2008) in her study about how young Mexican women use and reinterpret religion regarding the use of contraceptive methods. This approach does not deny, but goes beyond the concept of socialization, as I address sexuality as a contested domain where youth are not "empty buckets" who contain whatever is poured into them, institutional control is far to absolute, and the so-called socializing agents are not always successful in their endeavors (Waksler 1991).

In this chapter, I have introduced key institutions and actors in the everyday life of youth, taking into account their forms of relationships with youth and their narratives about sexuality. The next chapters will be devoted to analyze particular ways in which youth interact, reproduce, negotiate or challenge meanings, values and norms produced by the institutions I depicted in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4: THE CATHOLIC MORAL DISCOURSE IN THE EVERYDAY LIFE EXPERIENCES OF YOUTH

As I showed in the previous chapter, the official Catholic discourse on youth sexuality articulates social hierarchies and inequalities of gender and age, which are expressed through advice, norms and sanctions sustained and reproduced in daily life by institutions (e.g., school, family, churches) that actively intervene on young people's socialization in Ayacucho. This religious discourse qualifies and hierarchizes girls according to their sexual practices. Even though there is some variation, this discourse justifies double standards for women and men. On one hand, there is great concern for controlling or regulating young women's sexuality whose dignity and value are judged morally and socially according to their sexual restraint and demureness. On the other hand, there is more permissiveness with respect to the sexual freedom of male youth. My informants use biological reasons (less control of impulses) or social reasons (consequences to men's future social life) to justify this permissiveness. It is less problematic than it is for girls, who often take much or all responsibility for unplanned pregnancies.

Literature about Catholic religious influence on gender and sexuality has analyzed religion as a social institution and a cultural ideology that (re)produces constraining ideologies of femininity and limits women´s choices in sexuality and reproductive matters (e.g., Blofield 1998; Chávez and Cisneros 2004; Haas 1999; Lactao et al. 1998; Mujica 2007). At the same time, research in different Catholic societies has shown that women reinterpret religious doctrine strategically to broaden their sexual and reproductive choices and use it as a

moral framework to understand their particular situations(e.g., Belden and Stewart 2003; El Dawla et. al. 1998; Hirsch 2008; Paxson 2004; Petchesky and Judd 1998; Schneider and Schneider 1991). In Chapter 3, I explained that for youth in the city of Ayacucho, religion is a means to access social resources, as it allows them to broaden their social networks and access youth organizations and meetings. In this chapter, we will see that in the domain of sexuality, religion is a source of both constraining moral norms imposed on girls; and a known and contested script they use strategically to get respect and maintain a good social standing in moral hierarchies of value.

While conducting my fieldwork, I repeatedly observed an apparent paradox. On one hand, most young people, especially girls, were critics, in a way or another, of the double moral standard in official Catholic discourse. On the other hand, these girls were using the criteria for moral valuation contained in this discourse in acts of self-censorship and to identify social categories that define and classify their peers. This contrast motivated me to explore the following question: how does religious moral discourse (supported by the aforementioned institutions) shape the views and the experiences of girls in a highly contested religious context? My focus is on how this religious moral discourse affected the gendered experiences of young people and, especially, the regulation of girls' sexuality.

As I will show, although the Catholic model of women's virginity and modesty is not more "real" in the experience of most youth, it contributes to a double moral standard of gender with a series of implications for the organization of girls' everyday lives and their ways of feeling and interacting. The official Catholic moral discourse on the sexuality of youth shapes girls' forms of self-regulation or self-censorship, as well as influences the social

construction of sexual risk, the structure of parental and school norms, and the organization of allowed and forbidden spaces for female teenagers. At the same time, youth appealed to other value hierarchies that relativize the power of religion in their lives and, thus, it was not the only source of legitimacy or criteria used to make sense of their sexuality. Youth not only use their "interpretive agency" (Hirsch 2008: 95) to challenge or manipulate the Catholic official doctrine, they relativize it as one source of beliefs, among others, in a context of coexisting and competing discourses about gender and sexuality(as discussed in Chapter 3).

This chapter is organized taking into account the diverse ways in which religion does or does not influence the sexuality of youth in urban Ayacucho. In the first part of the chapter, I analyze the gaps between religious ideology and teenagers' experiences and interpretations of critical themes for the Catholic Church, such as girls' sexual initiation and contraception. Then, I explore two important ways in which the Catholic Church and other churches influence girls' sexuality. Finally, I show areas where religious influence is absent or very scarce: shame and reputation of heterosexual boys.

Gaps between Religious Ideology and Teenagers' Experiences and Interpretations

For anthropologists it is not new that cultural ideologies or systems of meanings may offer distorted or only partial accounts of what people actually think and do (Leavitt 1991). As has been noted by the anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod (1988) in her study about ideologies of gender and moral systems among the Bedouins, to describe ideology or culture is not equivalent to describing the experience or the behavior of the members of a society. She shows how among the Bedouins, "the dominant ideology of honor does not set the limits of the 'thinkable and unthinkable', or perhaps the 'feelable and unfeelable'" (Abu-Lughod 1988:

256). Similar to what Abu-Lughod concludes, the official Catholic ideology is not deterministic in structuring personal experiences, nor does it encompass the range of these experiences among *Ayacuchano* youth. Likewise, anthropologist Stephen Leavitt (1991) found that the local, cultural ideology of male sexual domination does not adequately describe actual sexual experiences of Bumbita men and women in Papua New Guinea. As he concluded, studying experience opens a space that allows for both studying cultural influence and exploring particular situations and the constellations of feelings and understandings about what informants do and think.

In the city of Ayacucho, adults and youth (both boys and girls), most of them Catholic believers, considered virginity desirable or valuable (following the hegemonic Catholic discourse), but recognized that this did not correspond with the actual experience of girls. The gaps are bigger when talking about contraception. The official religious view and prescriptions about virginity and contraception are constantly reinterpreted and challenged by youth, including those who are active members of their churches. In a way, some of these youth follow what the Argentinean sociologist Mallimaci calls "*cuentapropismo religioso*" (Mallimaci 2009), which means to believe on their own without depending on religious institutions, and which occurs in Argentina and other Latin American societies (Judd and Mallimaci 2013). Whereas for Ayacuchano adults, religion is a way to inculcate youth with Christian moral values, including those about virginity and demureness of girls; for youth, religion is a source of beliefs and an ideology that can be interpreted individually ("*de acuerdo a tu conciencia*" or "according to your conscience"). For youth, religion is both spiritual support and a social resource (See Chapter 3). These teenagers' religious

"cuentapropismo" does not mean that they abandon their Catholic, Evangelic or Mormon faith. They are believers, but make their own synthesis of beliefs and adopt a non-official religious discourse about gender and sexuality issues in the "busy intersection" in which sexuality is constructed in Ayacucho.

Virginity: Desirable but Unrealistic

Adults and youth agreed that only a minority of teenagers from Ayacucho follow the ideal model of a modest and virgin girl, synonymous with "decent" and "*digna*" (respectable) girl. At the same time, teachers and parents adopted these constructions of femininity, inspired by the moral Catholic discourse, as a desirable model for girls. Female teachers recognized, with certain nostalgia, that the model of young woman they inculcate in girls is "a kind of woman that nobody exactly embodies nowadays." This is explained by "modernity" associated to mass media, in which programs praise the sensuality of the feminine body and appeals to a more "liberal" attitude for women to exhibit the body and show more initiative towards the boys.

For example, Victoria, a teacher and counselor of a secondary school [high school] expressed her concerns about students from 15 to 19 years old who are in the last years of the school. I include a large part of the conversation with her as this teacher expressed common concerns and opinions of other teachers and parents. These concerns are focused on girls' sexuality and new or modern ideas and images of femininity disseminated by media that compete with the Catholic ideals of women that schools and families promote. Like other adults, this teacher interpreted forms of girls' sexual agency (e.g., having initiative with boys or wearing sexy cloths) as a sign of a lack of moral values and feared the social risks, such as

having a bad reputation, that these "liberal" girls were assuming. For these reasons, this teacher advocates for virginity and modesty among girls, although she recognized that this was a time of social changes when a teachers advice competes with modern and liberal models of women that mass media, markets and peers promote.

> Victoria: We, as teachers, cannot compete with television, the internet, fashion and everything you see on the streets, what is exhibited in the shops; right? This happens especially with girls from the fourth and fifth year [last years in Secondary School], when they are in first and second year, they still hear to you, even are a little timid, they felt ashamed when a boy said something to them, or if I ask something about sexuality or having boyfriends. Those girls still have values and experience shame ["*tienen verguenza"*] regarding sexual issues. But the older girls are more influenced by media and their friends, and don't hear to adult people, they consider that girls are modern, and the adults are backwards. Because of the NGO Jóvenes Huamanguinas and the Internet, some of these girls know more than me about sexuality. Once a girl asked me where the G-Spot is, and I really didn't know what to say. These girls used very provocative clothes in out of the school-activities or events organized by the school to collect funds. They wear very tight pants and some of them take the initiative with the boys they don't know. They think they are so modern because what they are doing is what youth in larger cities do. Before there was a "*pantalón a la cadera*" [pants low on the hips] in fashion and, my God, sometimes their panties were showing!
> Carmen: I see. Not sure if I understood well what you said, do you prefer that the older girls acted in the same way as the younger girls?
> Victoria: Well, honestly yes, because at least the younger girls hear you, and you can give advice to them. I think it is very risky for girls when they don't make others respect them ["*no se dan a respetar*"]. If they take the initiative with a boy, or wear very provocative clothes, boys can think that they are loose women ["*mujeres fáciles*"]. I always remind them: You not only have to be a decent girl, you also have to act as a decent girl.
> Carmen: And how is a girl decent?
> Victoria: A decent girl is a girl who respects herself and makes others respect her, a girl who can control their impulses. She is not someone who goes out with the first boy she knows.
> Carmen: When you say impulses, you are thinking of what kind of impulses?
> Victoria: [Silence]
> Carmen: Perhaps… sexual impulses?
> Victoria: Yes, mainly. I always say to girls: Virginity is a value for women; you have to think very well who deserves this treasure. But I think it is very difficult that these girls maintain their virginity because of what I am saying, they are more liberal, they are too free now because of this modernity which is invading the life of young people.

> Carmen: When you say modernity, you're thinking about those clothes you described to me, and what else?
> Victoria: Dressing, music, dancing .."*perreo*" dance, my God! It is almost if as they are having sex. This is very new here. I have never seen this kind of dance before, and I have worked in this school for ten years… Also, what they aspire to in their life, there are also good modern things, like being professional or having fewer children, this is very different from what their mothers did and thought. (Victoria, school teacher, 37 years old).

For youth, even those more involved in religious activities (from Catholic Church, Mormon or other religious traditions), the woman depicted by the religious moral discourse does not exist for multiple reasons. These reasons range from appeals to their rights and gender equality to the recognition of female virginity as a valuable but difficult condition to maintain for girls because, as Rosita said: "they are human and have sexual desires." Whereas the women appeal more to their rights and freedom, men mostly express, with variation, a sort of practical realism. Most of the boys consider that girls' virginity is a very desirable but not realistic expectation. The differences among boys' views were related to the forms in which they understood girls' sexual desires. In some cases, sexual desires were considered a "weakness" to which women and men succumb, but whose control is greater in women according to their different "nature" than in men whose irrepressible nature "cannot control." John explained it to me in the following way:

> John: From 10 girls at my age [he is 16 years old], I guess not more than three should be virgin in Ayacucho.
> Carmen: And how is it in the case of boys?
> John: Ja, ja, ja… From 10 boys at my age, only one or anyone is virgin.
> Carmen: What do you think is different?
> John: I think both women and men have sexual desires, but in the case of men they are weaker, it is much more difficult for men to have control of their desires because our nature is not as women's nature. Women's desires are more controllable and less frequent [*"menos seguidos"*] as men's desires. Men are easily excitable, every morning you have an erection, it is scientific information… But as I told you, I

> understand why girls are not virgins; I understand they also have weakness, although we are weaker than them. (John, 19 years old)

In other cases, the sexual desires of a woman were seen as equivalent to men's desires, as something "normal," as Richard says:

> I would like it if my girlfriend were a virgin because of romantic reasons. I want to be the first man in her life. However, I think it is hypocritical and unfair because I know women, as men, have the same sexual desires, it is normal. It is idiotic to ask a woman to do something that is against human nature.

Valuable but Relative: Navigating in Different Cultural Scenarios

As I mentioned before, the official religious moral discourse justified a double moral standard, which limited the sexual agency of women, meanwhile encouraging or justifying the agency of men. Most of my female informants questioned the double moral standard because they considered it "*machista*" ("male chauvinist" or "sexist"). Nonetheless, most of these young girls estimated virginity as valuable. For instance, to Blanca and Kimberly, very active girls in their religious communities (Catholic and Mormon churches), to keep virginity until marriage was a very important value and a woman's virtue, which held high merit. Blanca reaffirmed this saying:

> Yes, to me virginity is a value, a virtue, and I think to most of the girls it is also. Yes, to me it is a value, a very high value. (Blanca, 16 years old)

However, the same girls relativized the significance given to it, according to different circumstances. Even those involved in religious activities had questions or critiqued the religious moral discourse. Besides, Blanca and Kimberly emphasized that the virginity and the notion of honorable or respectable woman (woman's dignity) corresponded to a moral

order to which they belonged and in which they believed, but they admitted it is not the only one valid order. They also called attention to the fact that it was about personal decisions ("Who am I to judge?"), and was just in this point where they coincided with the approach about sexual rights of the NGO, where they are youth promoters in sexual and reproductive health.

Other girls, such as Nidia and Sherling, although they included virginity within the treasures of women, they questioned this as the only source of their dignity, and they gave other reasons for which a woman is "honorable," "respected" and has dignity. They did not question the relation between virginity and dignity, but added that dignity is also expressed through values and general principles as a person, and is related with other things socially valued, such as being a good female professional. This expanded concept of dignity, in the case of Nidia, is connected to the discourse promoted by the NGO Jóvenes Huamanguinas, which criticizes "male chauvinism" and advocates for more freedom and access to rights by women.

Nidia and Sherling sought to reconcile ideas learned as catechist in the parish and those they learned with the feminist NGO, which trained them as youth promoters in sexual and reproductive health. Initially they tried to put together what they learned in both institutions, but when they found it was conflictive, they adopted a narrative which valued but at the same time relativized the meaning of virginity and the notion of women's dignity associated to it. The dialog these girls established between the discourse from the parish and the feminist NGO, was not seeking necessarily to solve the contradictions between them, but to suggest coexistence between them, as expressed in Sherling's statement:

> Eh...virginity uhmm, virginity is…uhmm…how have it been called… reflects on woman's dignity and helps us to feel good about ourselves. It is a treasure that we appreciate don't we? But my classmate [also a promoter trained by the NGO] made me understand that virginity is not… your virginity is by all means your dignity? No. To me it is not; my dignity is appreciated for other circumstances not only because I'm a virgin… but mainly as a person…because of my values, for my principles, for having a distinguished professional career, and so on. And also a friend, a promoter helped me to understand this. And I kept it in mind, because I was too radical with this aspect of virginity. I refused …saying no and no and no. But later …there are aspects that are not necessarily connected like that. (Sherling, 16 years old)

The girls who had sexual relations attributed their new perspective on virginity to this experience. They mentioned that now they tend to give less importance to virginity than they did before. They said that when they considered the value of a woman, they focused on honesty, integrity and more general personality traits, including how a woman thinks and feels and not whether or not she is a virgin. Some girls admitted that they felt guilty and embarrassed that they have had sex because of their religious education. They were particularly worried about what people would say about them. This is the case of Vania, a 17-year-old Catholic girl, who had sexual relations with her boyfriend and feared that her friends would find out. In a different case, Luz reaffirmed with conviction her value as a person after being sexually initiated. To Luz it was particularly important to reaffirm that she was no less valuable because she lost her virginity to a boy who later abandoned her. Abandonment after sexual intimacy is considered to have a greater effect on girls' reputations because it would be a sign that the boy did not love her. One of the reasons young girls use to "justify" having sexual relationships is that there was love in the relationship:

> I was ashamed more than anything, to say yes, I had sex, and he left me; but now no, at least now the virginity is not very important but what you feel, isn't it? What you feel, what you think, that you are a sincere person, if you had sexual relations admit it

> "yes I'm not virgin anymore and for that I am not less or more valuable, but the same." (Luz, 19 years old)

But at the same time, Luz could not share with her current boyfriend her thinking about virginity because he told her he respected her and valued her because he thought she was virgin when she had sexual relations with him. That is why she told me she would have been "crazy" to confess to her current partner that he was not "the first" sexual partner she had:

> "Never have I thought to tell him I was not a virgin. I would have been crazy. Sure, if I tell him he was not the first, I don't want to even think about it." (Luz)

Among the young men interviewed and also trained by the feminist NGO, the narratives about a decent woman were also diverse, but it was common to focus on that woman's romantic past and her sexual behavior. Usually, they describe a decent woman as "not flirtatious," or one that does not take initiative in front of the boys, and "not easy to change of partners." Some said that decent women do not wear clothes with a very low-cut neckline, or very short and tight garments. None of them wanted to articulate the idea of a decent woman directly with virginity. They minimized its importance, criticizing some of those who give virginity a preponderate value. The narratives from these young men—with the exception of Elvis—still put the moral value of women on their modesty, and less on their initiative to approach men or sexual experience.

Nevertheless, this did not mean virginity lost its value among these boys. I could perceive different emphasis, but they declared to have a preference for a virgin girlfriend or at least an innocent girl without previous experiences, "to teach her." On one side were those

who wished, ideally, to have a virgin partner but realistically, knew this does not happen, so "taken it as it comes." Also there were young men who talked about a sort of "virginity of thought", and that was what it really counted, "never mind if she is initiated," the point was that "the girl's thoughts were innocent."Others said it depends on the reasons why she had sexual relations, the most accepted reason being when it was done "for love." Only one of the boys (who consider himself gothic), mentioned, that to him it did not matter why she was sexually initiated, including for attraction, desire or "to vent desire," in a similar way that men become initiated:

> Oh, those are things that each takes as each wants. If one decides to be a virgin, she will have her reasons. If not, and she simply wants to have relations with somebody who she likes, she feels attracted to him, she wants to have relations without worries, it is normal she did it; [she] wanted to vent desires nothing else […] If she is not a virgin, it happens, nothing and [the boys] say no, I don't like it. But suppose they have also had sex; they did the same. It is as if I were denied myself. (Elvis, 19 years old)

The boys interviewed did not want to be accused by girls or by the NGO of being male sexists, especially those who have been trained by the feminist NGO to become youth promoters. They also knew and imagined that in certain circles, a position in defense of virginity was associated with backwardness and not modernity. In a nuanced form, these boys tended to relativize the value of virginity, which contrasted with what the girls expressed about the opinions of their partners, who with some exceptions were not trained by the NGO. As in the case of the boyfriend of Luz, they said they valued more and respected girls more because they were virgins (or they thought they were), because in the opposite situation, they only "use them." The latter expression means boys would only be with these non-virgin girls just to have sex, knowing that afterwards they would leave them ("not taking them

seriously"). Nonetheless, no one could hide his preference of having a virgin girlfriend if it were possible. These boys also feared (probably like the non-trained boys) that a girl with sexual experience ("with a past") or sexual initiative could be unfaithful, as a girl's sexuality is considered to be a sort of "special gift" or a "treasure" that she offers to boys. As with the girls, young men also faced certain pressure from their own fears (socially shaped by a Catholic morality and a chauvinist gender regime) and different and contradictory discourses about masculinity, sexuality and gender equality, which co-exist today among youth.

Thus, adults and youth recognized that the Catholic ideal of femininity was almost non-existent among girls, but adults continue to promote this cultural representation of girls. Likewise, girls consider virginity to be a treasure, and when boys explored their most intimate thoughts they assign great value to it. The reasons adults give for the importance of girls' virginity and modesty were based not only on religious morality. They were also based on social reasons, like the loss of prestige for girls who are not virgins, and how having children early can have socioeconomic consequences which frustrate aspirations for progress. Among boys, accepting girls' sexual agency and equal rights in sexual matters, challenged conservative ideals about masculinity and obligated them to reframe a gender dynamic where girls offer their virginity and sexual restraint as their main asset.

Contraception: "It is not a Matter of Faith"

Adolescents who at various times have been active in their churches took different positions over their church discourses and provisions about sexuality and contraception. Some girls agreed totally or partially with religious provisions since they understood that these rules allowed them to belong to a community of believers, and were convinced of these rules'

purposes. For example, for Kimberly, having rules to follow was part of the definition of the Mormon community that makes them different from "kids in the world" who make free choices:

> Kimberly: If we did not follow the rules we would be “wordly teens” [mundane].
> Carmen: What are “worldly teens” like?
> Kimberly: So in my church, “worldly teens” are those can freely make decisions, it means that they do not follow any rules, then. Of course, so, but when you join (the church), they set the rules you have to follow.

Blanca, who is Catholic, shared Kimberly’s view in some way, particularly regarding virginity, but disagreed with Catholic Church rejection of modern contraception methods and the emergency contraceptives. Kimberly and Blanca’s common focus on sexual restrictions are part of their affiliation with religious communities, although Blanca thought there could be more flexibility when considering scientific facts.

> Blanca: I think you, as a Catholic believer, should follow certain values, moral values, religious values, right? Catholics believe in the Virgin Mary, then, I understand why virginity is important. But about contraceptive methods, I think it is not a matter of faith, the science tell us that pills and condoms are not abortive and they could help you to avoid future problems. I think you commit a sin if you have a child that you could not raise, that you are not prepared to have, or get an incurable disease that you could have prevented.
> Carmen: Interesting. And what do you think about not having sex but only with reproductive purposes as the Church says?
> Blanca: I think it will be very irresponsible, because nowadays it is very difficult to provide food, education, and all that children need, especially if you have many.

On the other hand, most of the girls challenged provisions on sexuality and contraception set by their church, in a more free or radical way. Some of the girls used contraceptive methods and the emergency pill, and the major concerns were mostly possible social sanctions (eg., damaging their social reputation) rather than moral pangs. They did not

find any contradiction between this disagreement and their faith or religious affiliation, as Catholic women in other Latin American countries did (see for example, Belden and Stewart 2003). Most of my informants (boys and girls, and also adults) shared the idea that contraception was not a sin but a contribution of modern times to prevent unwanted pregnancies that could ruin the future of youth. For example, Chela defined herself as Catholic but questioned the discourse on the virginity-based dignity of women as well as the abortive nature of modern contraception methods and the emergency contraceptives. In this regard, all the information on contraception, sexual and women's rights, provided by the NGO had been crucial. Although most of my informants had some information about these themes by school or mass media, all of them said that the first time that they have talked openly and obtained complete information about these themes was in the participatory sessions promoted by the NGO (see also Chapter 3). It was important to say that Kimberly and Blanca were also advocates who have been trained in the same topics by the same NGO, but as it is shown, their responses were different. Chela was no longer active in her parish. She was accused by a catechist of acting like a sheep (i.e., of being influenced by the NGO), but she remarked she had not quit parish activities for that reason but because she had no spare time so she decided to work only for the NGO. For adults, the major concern was that knowing about contraception could promote sexual relationships among youth, but contraception itself was not considered to be against Catholic beliefs. In the case of initiated girls and boys, most of adults I interviewed agree with contraception. A commonly expressed hope was that both girls and boys could study and have fewer jobs and a better economic situation than their parents.

Where Does the Discourse about the "Decent and Respectable Woman" Live?

Arguments depicted above were not uncommon among both young men and women. However, in everyday experiences of youth there were two domains where the decent or honorable woman, who cultivates chastity and restrains her sexual desires, was particularly "alive." One is the domain of emotions, where I observed shame or disgust about sexual symbols and behaviors considered forbidden, banned, inappropriate, and abject, and that may damage girls' reputation. The other is the domain of norms and sanctions given by adults (e.g., parents and teachers), which shaped constructions and situations of risk, as well as the division of social spaces and romantic and sexual encounters. These prescriptions are concrete forms used by adults that reproduce the dichotomies house/street, women/men, protection/danger, and the association between gender, spatial divisions and roles as victim of or responsible for risks: women-house-protection/men-street- danger.

Forms of Self-control and Self-censorship

Many of the female informants admitted to feeling shame and disgust toward sexual relations or looking male genitals, especially the first time when they had sexual intercourse, or they were about to have it. During the sessions of workshops on sexuality promoted by the NGO Jóvenes Huamanguinas, I observed nervous laughter or giggles coming from girls, and also girls who covered their faces in front of videos containing scenes suggesting physical contact between partners (heterosexuals).In the case of boys, there was also laughter, but no one covered his face, and contrary than girls, they whispered jokes among themselves.

Goffman (1967) defines shame as a social and reflexive emotion that is dependent on the valuation of others. In the same sense, Jennifer Manion, says that shame and aversion would be expressions of what a sudden conscience (knowledge) of "the self" or the "inner self" considers as less good than socially expected, which rush or precipitate for identification of others (real or imaginatively), or simply by the shamed "inner self" (Manion 2003). In the cases referred to above we observe an internalization of values and negative significances associated to what is considered "less virtuous" and "dirty" by young women. For the sociologist, R. W. Connell (1987), the structure of emotional attachments or cathexis is one of the three major structures that organize the "gender regimens" together with the structures of power relations and the division of labor. Affect is an important component of the experience of gender (Hirsch and Wardlow, 2006), which in case of the young people from this study configures sexual meanings and experiences, and also contributes to structure ways of social self-regulation.

The feeling of shame among the youth in the city of Ayacucho is an experience clearly configured by the gendered structure of emotional attachments, as it has been shown in different latitudes (see Manion 2003). This is expressed in the differentiated situations that motivate feeling shame or embarrassment in girls and boys, or the so-called "triggers" of this emotion. The situations in which the girls felt shame are connected with interiorized moral ideals about their sexual and gendered behavior: ideals of feminine decency and modesty. Following the concept of *habitus* developed by Bourdieu, I could say that shame and disgust experienced by female young towards sex, that they many times could not explain, are part of their "emotional habitus." I defined "emotional habitus" as an affective disposition product of

the work of inculcation and appropriation of gendered moral structures, which shape the social relations and ways of recognition of youth. Habitus as a structured or "socialized subjectivity" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:126) is a concept by Bourdieu that goes beyond dualisms of agency/structure and objective/subjective. For Bourdieu, habitus does not simply mirror social structures; its principles are internalized by individuals through the processes of socialization and change based on interactions with social structure (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

Not in all the cases, but most of my informants could not explain what was motivating their shame and repulsion even if they could describe with details their feelings of dirtiness or discomfort associated with watching something incorrect or bad. At least half of the girls confessed that the shame of talking about sex explains why even if they had information on condoms, they did not have the confidence to ask their partner to use it. Most of them felt embarrassed "just by the theme itself," that is, talking about how to have sexual relations. When I insisted on knowing the reasons for this shame, most of them said they do not know exactly why, or rather answer with a tautology (because it is embarrassing, because it is just like that). Later after thinking about their shame, or due to my insistence, they mentioned how they have associated it to something forbidden, "vulgar" or "dirty." My conversation with Mariella, a 16-year-old girl and advocate in sexual and reproductive health, illustrates the difficulties of speaking about the reasons of shame related to sexuality and the meanings associated to it:

> Mariella: I didn't tell him about it and anything about sex, it was so embarrassing. How I could tell him about condoms? I learnt about it, but I couldn't, I couldn't, I didn't find the way to tell my boyfriend.
> Carmen: And why do you think it was so difficult to tell him?

> Mariella: Because I told you, it is embarrassing.
> Carmen: What is the most embarrassing?
> Mariella: All is embarrassing, how could I explain it to you? It is just talking about something that you shouldn't…
> Carmen: Yes, I understand…
> Mariella: Mmmm….[silence] You shouldn't because it makes you feel embarrassed. Although now we talk a bit more freely about sex and condoms because the workshops of Jóvenes Huamanguinas [the NGO], but all, all your life you learnt that it [sex] is dirty, vulgar, it [the idea about sex] is inside you ["metido en tí"]!

As anthropologists Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1997) suggest, to study emotion lets us explore the "lost connections" between mind and body, which have been erased by a Cartesian vision of the world. Also, in the field of emotions the links between individuals, society and policies exerted over the bodies can be observed. The emotions entail at the same time feelings and cognitive orientations, public morality and cultural ideology (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1997: 28). The shame and disgust that female teenagers experience yet and usually do not question, are the result of the internalization of a gendered public morality and cultural ideology influenced by the ideology of Catholic Church that qualify women as good, pure, honorable or virtuous if they do not yield to "temptation" and postpone or force back their sexual desires. This view shapes girls' emotional habitus and their responses to sexual symbols or erotic scenes.

These emotional responses are reinforced by shared social norms and sanctions that make talking about sex embarrassing for girls. In this way, an important reason girls gave for not speaking about sex and condoms with their partners is that talking about sex with the boyfriend or potential partner puts girls at social risk of having to answer possible questions about their precedent sexual life, with the possibility of be marked as a "*recorrida*" (a woman

who have had many partners or a loose woman). Thus, talking about sex is embarrassing and could be directly damaging the moral prestige of the female youth, as Sherling said:

> It's been thought that the girls, who know [about sex or condoms], are those who have experimented or want to experiment with, and that is not approved ["*mal visto*"]. From there to "femme fatale" or a loose woman there is only a step. Maybe if your boyfriend is an advocate, or both are advocates, people won't think like that… but even that, in the very moment, is embarrassing ["*da roche, pues*"]. (Sherling, 16 years old)

Other informants who tried to see deeper on the lasting nature of their feelings of shame and disgust, despite the training received as youth promoters in sexual and reproductive health, said that this is because of the "male chauvinism" and religiosity which were part of the social background where they had grown up with in Ayacucho. Miriam and Nidia explained this to me:

> Only imagining being like that with Jimmy, having sexual intercourse, I felt disgusting and embarrassed of myself and also fear of getting pregnant, but not, until right now I keep feeling the same." (Miriam, 16 years old)

> Here, in Ayacucho, we live in a male chauvinist society, don't we? And that is what people are accustomed to, even me. A woman is special, isn't she? It is like something disgusting to ask her to have sexual relations or something like that, isn't it? That is, in this society in Ayacucho, it is criticized, condemned in a woman. How could I say? Even me, myself…yes, in a way or another, as I have grown up here, and it is like that… and there is also a lot of religiosity. (Nidia, 18 years old)

The phrase used by Nidia ("even me") highlights the persistence of social emotions of shame and disgust regarding sexual relations, even after having sessions with the NGO specially to help them meditate, to think about and make them aware that sexual rights[30] are rights that also belong to women. The contrast between what has been thought it over and what is actually feeling, shows how deeply the *habitus* is internalized within our bodies, as

[30]Defined and contextualized in Chapters 1 and 2.

well as in our minds, as a "preconscious, shared set of acquired and embodied dispositions and understandings of the world, developed through both objective structures and personal history" (Tranter 2006:4).

Shame and Affected Shame

The emotional habitus referred above is not condemned to inertia in times of social change, on the contrary, habitus develop in context and the body-self can be re-educated (Wade 2011). In a context of social changes (see Chapter 2) and coexistence of different narratives and institutions related to sexuality (see Chapter 3), there were a constant tension and negotiation between the old and (relatively) new ideas and experiences related to girls' sexuality and sexual agency. For example, whereas feeling ashamed facing some situations related to sex and sexuality was a common experience among the girls, some of them also referred to moments in which they did not experienced such an emotion and had to perform as if they have shame. Some of these young women confessed that they had to pretend having shame as a way to adapt to the social expectative and be considered "good," especially in front of the adults under whose tutelage they are, or in front of boys who they know are "chauvinist" or boys who they only know recently. As Hirsch concluded in her study about Mexican women, "demonstrations of shame are ultimately demonstrations of a woman´s respectability" (Hirsch 2003: 100), and girls in urban Ayacucho were very aware about that. Adults and youth do not ignore this situation entirely and used the phrase: "they pretend to be saints" to indicate that "girls try to show more virtue than the one really they have," when talking about sexual issues or in front of erotic scenes or images of explicit sex, such as those they found on the Internet

or which are part of films they watch in groups as part of educational activities of self-awareness promoted by the NGO.

This need for an affected shame expresses the tension between changes produced in the young women and social expectations that are shared by their parents, teachers, and also by their male counterparts. To summarize the shift in their ways of thinking and feeling about sexuality, girls used the expression "*perder la verguenza*" ("to lose the sense of shame"), which might have, at the same time, a negative and a positive meaning. The tension between both connotations is illustrated by Marilyn, who studied in a girls-only public school carried out with the collaboration of Catholic nuns. She suggested tensions and challenges in her process of "losing the sense of shame", particularly because the of Catholic Church's influence in the everyday of youth in Ayacucho (contextualized in Chapter 3):

> Marilyn: I could say that I have lost the sense of shame ["*he perdido la verguenza*"] about things that make me feel embarrassed before…. Yes, I can say that.
> Carmen: Could you tell me about some situations or things that made you feel more embarrassed?
> Marilyn: Mmm … about what is unspeakable for the teachers and my mother, about what they told me it is very bad. My tutor says: "it is not for "*señoritas*" [misses], you have to be respectable women, leave these issues for men". Then am I a "*sinverguenza*" [shameless person]? Ja, ja, ja….No.... it is that now I don't feel bad about talking about "*mis partes*" [genitals] and what I felt when I am with Jimmie [her boyfriend], but still I do not feel comfortable speaking with him about my feelings. Last time he asked me, "what do you feel, do you like it?" I could not speak with him about it. I learnt that it is not a bad thing …. But it still sounds very odd and strong, but less than before. Two years ago, I could not speak about sex, I even could not watch the film about "your first time" that Leila (NGO facilitator) showed us. Only watching some scenes feels like you are doing something that is prohibited for girls…. that's the way I am raised … but now I lost the sense of shame ["*yo he perdido la verguenza"*]. I think it is not totally good because I have to be very careful with my mother and some boys. I think most of the boys, because many of them have dirty thoughts ["*tienen la mentecochina"*], these boys may think that I am a "*facilonga*" [loose woman] or things like that. It is easy to say to others: "yes, it is natural, don't be ashamed of knowing more about your body; talking about sex is normal." The point is what others may think about you when most of the people think different from you.

> Most of us in Ayacucho are Catholic people, you know that, you have heard our teachers and the mayor, isn't it? Religion is everywhere. (Marilyn, 17 years old)

The girls that were sexually initiated, with the exception of one of them, when were interviewed recounted how they pass from feeling ashamed and even having some initial disgust to enjoying sexual relations, and later even talking with more freedom about sex. New images of femininity disseminated by the mass media influenced a greater openness to recognize girls' rights to express themselves sexually. These images exhibit the body in a sensual way, emphasizing the sensuality, not the modesty. They usually are pictures of local and international female popular artists, which now are commonly observed in some newspapers kiosks and on the walls of bodegas and bars. Zaida, a18 year-old girl, narrated her experience in this way:

> Now I am more open about how to see my body and sex. Before when I was [in this case, "I was" means I had sexual relations] with my boyfriend I didn't know almost anything about my body, I mean, about what I can feel with different parts of my body, and I see now that it is natural. Before, I even do not want to see "*mis partes*" [intimate parts or genitals]. It was very difficult the first times I was with my boyfriend. I talked with my best friend about it and she told me: "Have you ever seen Shakira [Colombian pop artist]? She is very sexy, she is not a bad girl, but she is sexy in her clothes and movements. Also…not too far, you have to think about Teresita [character of a popular Peruvian serie], she is sexy and is admired by girls and boys here. Have you ever heard anyone criticizing them as if were "*facilongas*" [loose women] or "*jugadoras*" [players]?" And I said yes, she was right…. Have you ever seen Shakira's or Teresita's posters in the Plaza? I started to observe them more in detail, and I like her movements and clothing style… Why can't I do what they do, and many of my friends do?

In some cases, I can perceive the work done by the NGO Jóvenes Huamanguinas, which offers a different narrative about sexuality that is conceptualized as part of women's rights and, more broadly, of young people's rights. However, most adults with whom these

youth have close relationships did not accept this new narrative, and it often generated conflicts that did not contribute with the consolidation of a new view about sexuality. The experience of Raquel, a girl trained by the local NGO as a youth advocate of sexual and reproductive health, illustrates some challenges around the possibility of viewing and experiencing sexuality under a perspective of girls' rights:

> I talk with my boyfriend about it. This is because he is very open and he is also participating in the workshops; he is a *promotor* [advocate] too. We learnt in the workshops that sexual pleasure and sexual relations are not bad, not a sin, not a dirty thing. Those things are part of my rights, the rights of youth, and the most difficult to accept: that I, as a girl, have the right to know and use contraceptives, the right to say yes or no regarding sexual relations, this is what I learned with Leila (NGO facilitator) and what I teach to other girls. Also, you see, it is what we put in the "*fotonovela*" […] and showed in the theatrical play. But it was not immediate. I, myself, used a dildo to teach about condom use to other girls and boys, but the first times I turned red in my face. Could you imagine? I have never seen this…this was as if I had a penis in front of my face!! Even less, I have never touched a penis!! And I had to put the condom on the dildo. How embarrassing!! You cannot change what you feel very soon. Even to say penis is shameful… It is harder if people told you again and again: "What rights? You have responsibilities, such as studying, helping your mother and father…;" "you shouldn't think about sex yet" "Those are your responsibilities and rights as youth: the right of studying, the right of helping your parents." This is what most of my teachers told me. [...] My mother! I explained it to her, but she did not want to believe what I learned with Jóvenes Huamanguinas [the NGO], she came to talk with Leila because she thought that the NGO was promoting sexual initiation among youth in Ayacucho. I felt embarrassed because of that. (Raquel, 19 years old)

It would have been very difficult distinguish an "acted" feeling of shame and disgust from the "real." In any case, it is clear that shame and disgust are part of the habitus and script that is expected that the "decent" and "honorable" girls must follow (or act) in front of erotic manifestations, explicit sex or masculine or feminine genitals. Religion is contested but still has great influence on institutions and the adults on whom youth depend. Girls know this and

sometimes feign shame and embarrassment, strategically performing the moral script for a decent girl that most adults and boys expect.

Norms, Restrictions, Prohibitions and Surveillance

As has been described in Chapter 2, the generational gap between parents and other significant adults (teachers or family relatives) and the youth in the city of Ayacucho do not situate them in different social and cultural worlds but in worlds that are dislocated and a bit disconnected. The gaps are bigger between the young girls and their mothers, than between the young boys and their fathers, regarding their access to education and information, personal outfits, and freedom to move and interact with persons from the opposite sex. The young women are urban girls, most of them have already reached high school educational level, and their expectations are to become professionals. They also want to look "sexy" like the celebrities and to be interrelated through virtual social networks. Because of the NGO program they attend, now they know about contraception, the morning-after pill and sexual rights. They do not want to be limited in their outings, friendships, and ways of dressing or wearing makeup, as their mothers did in their original towns where they come from.

The response from mothers and fathers, vis-à-vis what they consider an "excess" of liberty and "lack of shame" of the young women, is to increase their vigilance and be stricter with the margins regarding the time they spend out of the home and the places youth can go. From their side, teachers and priests, or youth leaders from churches, preach to reinforce the Catholic ideal of an honorable and decent woman, which is defined by her modesty and control of her sexual desires. Besides this, schools are seeking to be stricter in norms about

body arrangements, personal appearance and interpersonal relations involving girls and boys. That is, the relation among adults and young women is configured mostly as particularly authoritarian, conflictive, and as one where a dialogue of the deaf occurs.

Many of the adults' prohibitions and restrictions for girls aim to prevent undesired pregnancy and bad reputation, as these are directly associated with what some anthropologists has called "social risks" (Chapman, 2006; Hirsch et al., 2007). These risks can frustrate parental hopes of progress for their children as one of the mothers summarizes in a phrase, also repeated by female teachers associated to girls: "*embarazo es atraso*" ["pregnancy is backwardness"]. The social risks for girls in Ayacucho include those which significantly can affect their social prestige and their future economic and social opportunities, associated with studying and getting a partner who respect them and help them to get a better life.

What created an important difference of gender in parents' norms and worries was what is summarized in the recurrent sayings among adults: "*la mujer tiene más que perder*" ("the women have more to lose [than men]"), or "*el hombre siempre cae parado*" ("the man always lands on his feet"). The meanings of these sayings are conceptually relevant to understanding why significant adults place girls' sexual and social risks in the moral sphere, rather than in biological, public health or socioeconomic terrains, as happens in the case of boys. These phrases are referred mainly to serious and long-term consequences for girls of their current romantic and sexual relationships, such as undesired pregnancies and bad reputation of girls. The social risks of girls were evaluated as greater than for boys because not only do girls risk diminishing their opportunities and dedication to their studies if they get pregnant, but there are other risks associated with reducing their present and future prestige

and social positions, such as being judged as a "*chica fácil*" (loose girl). The question parents often asked their daughters regarding sexual activity and pregnancy risk was: "Who is going to love you being like that [a girl who has sexual relations and gets pregnant]?" This idea is related to the fact that in gender arrangements or exchanges in heterosexual partnering relationships, the girl's most important assets are her sexual reputation and reproductive role. This point will be developed in the next chapter where I analyze girls' gender games.

The young women agreed with the worries of their parents have about undesired pregnancy and the future social risks, but they disagreed on limitations and ways of control imposed by their parents with the intention to protect the girls. To some of the girls it is a kind of hounding or chasing on the part of the adults who have excessive suspicion, acting warily and giving them little freedom. The parents interviewed believed that their daughters "do not have opportunities to be tempted to have sexual relationships" and assumed that if their daughters had sexual intercourse with their boyfriends, a pregnancy would be predictable, a situation that they have seen in their family and neighborhood. With some exceptions, parents do not talk about the use of contraception as a way to prevent pregnancy, as it would be a tacit approval of girls having sexual relations. They prefer to warn about pregnancy as a dissuasive mechanism. Most of my informants told me that usually their parents mentioned the case of any girl they know as an example of bad consequences of girls' sexual lack of control. For instance, Clarita says:

> Clarita: It is bad luck but always my mother has a name to mention, and says: "you know what happen to "*fulana*," don't you? It is what will happen to you if you are a crazy woman and do not behave as a "*señorita*" that gets respect for the boys ["*que se hace respetar por los chicos*"]."
> Carmen: Bad luck… And how about contraception methods, have you ever talked with your parents about methods?

> Clarita: No, never! My father never talked with me about these issues, and my mother always says: "take care, take care"; "don't do it," but when say that she never is thinking about contraception, she is thinking about avoiding sexual relations because she says: all the boys are equal, they only want to have sex with you and then, they will leave you. This is the case of "*mengana;*" that is all what my mother say. (Clarita, 16 years old)

Parental mechanisms of protecting girls are focused on control and reproducing religious moral hierarchies and gender inequalities that constrain girls' sexuality, mobility and social relations. Although not all parents are active members of the Catholic Church, they value virginity and reproduce Catholic prescriptions in their expectations and norms. They maintain that girls are only allowed to have sex in marriage and demand that their daughters show modesty and decency in their behavior. Many times these norms implied restrictions that are not applied to their sons or other masculine family members who are underage. Examples of these gendered restrictions regarding allowed places to go out, and mechanisms of control are depicted below.

"A Girl from Her House": The Basis of a Geography of Sexual Vulnerability

The established norms given by the parents and the municipal regulations, which deny admission to persons under 18 years to public centers of entertainment, organized in an important way, the physical and social space in which the young people spent their free time, or where they met their potential partners, and had sexual and erotic encounters. For the parents, risky spaces for their children, and especially for their daughters, were associated with the street and places for diversion and recreation. They assumed that the house and the presence of family provided protection, while the danger was found outside. The argument was that girls were more exposed to dangers than boys either on the street or particularly in

spaces of diversion. Even more, moral qualities of a decent and honest woman are defined in terms of their confinement to their houses, as in "a girl from her house."

Risks in the streets for boys are also a reason for parent's concern, but they are considered part of masculine socialization, and it is assumed that boys as men are better prepared to face risks in the streets, and also that they have to learn to defend themselves from dangers. Richard's mother told me:

> You cannot compare, it is very, very different. You cannot raise your girls and boys in the same way. Boys have to learn to fight, to defend themselves and to their sisters and after, to protect their girlfriends and then, to protect their daughters. Girls still need to be protected because although you if want to defend yourself, men are stronger, it is by nature. Of course, now women have more opportunities than before, and legally we have the same rights. But as you see in this neighborhood, there are young single mothers, there are sexual violations of girls, there are battered women … You don't see men in that situation, maybe there are cases, but are very rare.

Parental responses to the potential social consequences of their daughters' sexual behavior are focused on controlling their social relations and physical mobility. As social reputation and sexual risks are intermingled in parents' concerns, contraception becomes unthinkable or at least dangerous or inappropriate advice for their girls. This view also obscure other risks, such as getting a sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or HIV, or being sexually abused, which take a marginal place in the advice and warnings from the adults, or simply these other situations are totally absent from their warnings.

For parents, religious ideology about virginity and modesty is more than just a desirable moral standard consistent with their Catholic or Christian beliefs. In a context of changes and generational gaps about decency and femininity, where some parents and teachers see girls as "crazy" or "uncontrollable", religious ideology becomes a means of

parental control and prevention of social risks that their daughters could face due to an "excess" of sexual agency or their capacity to make decisions about their sexuality. Paradoxically, protective parental norms contribute to situations of social and sexual vulnerability for youth, which will be analyzed in Chapter 7.

Parental Norms and Social Control Focused on Girls

Parents set a time to return home for both boys and girls, but are stricter with the girls. For instance Dulia has permission to return at eight o'clock in the evening, whereas her "brother" (in fact her cousin who lives with her family) who is younger than her, is allowed to come back later, at eleven o'clock in the night. If Dulia breaks the rule she receives complaints from her parents, but if her brother does it, there are no sanctions or other forms of disapproval of him:

> When my mother let me go until eight o'clock, if I come back half an hour late, she says "where have you been!" and this and that. She tells me, using a tone of criticism. But when my brother comes two hours later, she just says, "close the door, don't leave it open." I don't like that; I say nothing. (Dulia, 17 years old)

Parents are more aware of the activities of girls than those of the boys, and object more often to letting girls leave the house, and they place more restrictions on the time to return home as young men are allowed to come back later. For instance, it was more difficult for the girls than for the boys to get permission from the parents to travel and attend to regional and national meetings organized by the NGO, which chose them to become youth promoters in sexual and reproductive health. In addition, some parents are aware of the clothes and make up their daughters wear to go out of the house. Some of the girls are forbidden to apply too much make up or to dye their hair.

To be sure that the young women are protected and that they will respect the norms regarding time and spaces allowed, mothers call their daughters' cell phones insistently and show very much concern if they come back home smelling of alcohol when they return late. Mothers and fathers establish sanctions to dissuade and punish their children when they break the established norms. These punishments included restricted permission to go out or receive more domestic duties at home (mostly in women's case), physical or verbal violence, and in extreme cases, parents throw them out of the house. For example, Marylin (17 years old) usually argued with her mother for her work at school, because of the way she dressed or used make up (e.g., the low cut dress, her low-cut neckline T shirts, her dyed hair), the time she spent at Internet cafes, her number of outings, or the money she ask for to buy more clothes). Different from her sisters who were more obedient of the mother's rules, Marylin was under her mother's permanent watch, and was assigned more domestic work as a manner to keep her within the home.

When the parents were absent, members of the family (e.g., older brothers, grandparents, aunts or uncles) or neighbors took care of the teenagers and played this role of protective surveillance, especially of the girls. Independently of the physical presence of parents, neighbors and relatives usually informed parents about where and with whom they have seen the girls. Girls thought this surveillance did not only come from worries, but that it was also a way of social sanction or criticism, which many times is expressed as a provocative gossip. Indeed, gossip was often used as a way to express criticism through making public a behavior judged as inappropriate. Although it was not clear that the aim of the gossip was stop or punish the disapproved behaviors or situations, the truth is that it had

negative consequences for girls when the parents became aware of it. Most of the gossip about girls was about where and by whom they were seen, and any kind of masculine company led to speculation about flirting and romance, including relatives, friends and acquaintances. On the other hand, gossip about boys usually was mainly about their suspected or proven infidelities, and disseminated among girls but not among their parents, who were not particularly concerned about this kind of behavior of their sons as they were about the romantic and sexual life of their daughters. As it has been shown in classic anthropological literature (Gluckman 1963), gossip worked in Ayacucho city as a tool for social control and enforcing social norms; in this case, gendered norms and morals. However, gossip and other forms of girls' vigilance and control did not stop them from breaking the rules, but increased generational gaps and different kinds of risky situations for girls (and also for boys). Girls preferred not to talk with their parents about sexual issues to avoid more control. Likewise, they visited hidden, obscure or clandestine places to avoid being seen by family members or their parents' acquaintances.

Are Boys' Sexualities beyond Religion?

By contrast to what happens with girls, the sexual and gender behavior of heterosexual young men usually was not associated with religious principles of morality. Both adults and youth usually appealed to biology to explain why it is most difficult to ask boys to restrain their sexual desires. However, due to the NGO training, this view was relativized by some boys and girls, who said that this biological argument is a chauvinist justification and both girls and boys have the right and human need to have sexual relations. The only theme related to boys' sexuality that was addressed by the religious discourse was homosexuality of both boys and

girls, which was defined by catechists “contrary to natural and divine law.” But even in this case, religious ideology was not more important than other sources of meanings and values related to notions of masculinity.

When boys watched a film with scenes of homoerotism as part of the NGO trainings, most of them laughed nervously but were trying to be politically correct with their position as advocates in sexual and reproductive health while they were in a group. One of them told me he felt tempted to leave the room because he did not want to continue watching the film, which repulsed him. However, he did not do it “because that conduct is not expected from an advocate.” Likewise, in the individual interview, boys laughed nervously or express disgust through gesture (facial gestures) when talking about homoerotic scenes of the mentioned film. Only some boys appealed to religious ideologies about homosexuality, but most of them referred to a threaten masculinity. They concurred that their biggest shame might be when other boys know if they received sexual insinuations from other men, because with this knowledge they can make fun of them and brings about doubts related to their manliness and virility. They also said they felt disgust to see a gay couple kissing or caressing each other (which I observed directly when the women advocates showed a video that contained some scenes of masculine homoerotism). However, they have a narrative expressing a respect to gay rights, several of them indicated to me “all is ok provided that they keep a distance,” or “provided that they don’t come up to me.” Nevertheless, this situation of receiving sexual invitations from other men was described as infrequent, because the experience of homoerotism occurs in a very marginal and hidden way in Ayacucho.

Depending on who was their interlocutor, the young men expressed themselves with varying liberty and pride about their sexual experiences. When they talk with their peers of the same gender they did not show shame to talk about their sexual "conquests" ["*conquistas*"] and sexual experiences with different "types of women," including their girlfriends, casual partners (e.g., "*vacilones*" or just for fun-relations; "*choque y fuga*" or just for a moment-relations) or sex workers. Thinking about the double moral standard cultivated among men of their age, Lenin said: "Sure, for instance if a man says I have relations with several women, that's 'normal' they say to you; it is like they praise it." Nevertheless, several boys experienced shame in talking about their sexual behaviors when these were considered socially censured, forbidden or sinful, such as having sex with sex workers, having several partners simultaneously, having sex with casual partners, and more than those, having participated in homoerotic games.

Only a minority of the young men interviewed confessed to have felt shame of talking about sex and condoms with their girlfriends, which was connected with their religious formation. One of them also had the courage to suggest, with a certain degree of embarrassment, that he was afraid of not performing well sexually using a condom, and that is why he did not talk about it with his girlfriend, even though he was well informed about the importance of using it. On the other hand, most of the boys said they were not embarrassed to talk about sex and condoms with their partners, but they did not do it (and thereby did not plan when to have sex with their girlfriend) because they did not want to offend them or make them feel embarrassed. Their interpretation of what was an offense or what produced embarrassment in women was based on a description that comes from Catholic moral

discourse and its dichotomizing gender categories, which denies the sexual desires of "good girls." The offense was associated with the idea that good girls might possibly think boys were with them just for a "sexual interest" or "to use them." Carlos asserts that "they could think, 'this boy is treating me as a loose woman or as a prostitute,'" which calls into question not only the value of the girl, but also the feeling the boy have towards her, or the serious kind of relationship boy would like to have with the girl. Other boys said they did not want "to scare" their girlfriend or potential couple, because if they talk about these themes, the girls might perceive them with fear and suspicion because they may believe that boys want to push them or even force them to have sex as "girls often believe that boys usually want sex, only sex" (Ricardo).

From a different angle, boys expressed they felt shame in situations in front of their male peers where they had to judge what they were capable of getting from their relations with girls, such as successful seduction. The shame they felt in this case was associated with a system of prestige that had to do with who was better or was a man of great worth, an assessment that is built off other standards (virility, sex appeal, etc.) more than considering a moral standard of what is allowed, pure or dirty. Thus, for instance, boys felt embarrassed to admit that they never had a girlfriend or that they never had sexual relationships, or that they were rejected ("*choteado*," meaning "a rejected one") by a girl at a party. Then, different from girls, one of the "triggers" for shame or embarrassment among boys is connected with his lack of sexual agency or with his abilities to be a good conqueror. To the contrary, girls were sanctioned when they took the initiative to approach a boy and felt embarrassed (or it was

expected that they should feel this way) in doing it, or when they talked openly about sex, or showed sexual initiative, such as looking and touching the bodies of their boyfriends.

Honor and Shame within a Context of Change

In the previous sections I illustrated a series of conflicts, changes and continuities regarding hegemonic ideas about gender and sexuality in Ayacucho. Here I reflect about cultural changes underlying the fracturing and reformulation of the honor and shame ideology, which is associated with Catholic ideals of femininity and served, in the past, as a broad framework to explain the social organization of gender and sexuality in Latin American countries, including Peru.

To feel shame or the strategic need to show it in front of others is linked in some way with a gendered division of moral labor between men and women, alluded to by the ideology of "honor and shame" used to characterize Mediterranean societies (Pitt-Rivers 1977, 1992; Gilmore 1987). According to this division, moral qualities are determined and distributed between the sexes: thus, the honor is associated with men and the shame with women. Peruvian anthropologist Norma Fuller (2004) asserts that these studies about honor and shame in Mediterranean societies help to understand the historical roots of the systems of gender in the Latin-American countries, which have been significantly influenced by the Spanish culture.

For Fuller, the Peruvian system of gender was characterized by a division of moral labor in which masculine moral attributes were associated to the strength, virility, and responsibility, whereas, feminine moral characteristics would be sexual modesty and moral superiority, which were highly influenced by Catholic values. However, Fuller notes a series

of changes that undermined the traditional social structure, and contributed to the loss of legitimacy of this double moral standard. This author identifies three main social issues related to gender transformations in Peru: the influence put forth by the psychological discourses that conceptualize sexuality as a central aspect of the personality and consider that sexual repression can led to a pathology; the access to modern contraceptive methods, which allowed for a degree of separation between sexual practices and the reproduction; and the loss of legal and ethical legitimacy of the association between the honor of the woman and her sexual behavior. At the same time, Fuller recognized that the observed changes are given in a very heterogeneous way, and above all, that they had a major impact on the urban middle classes, and they are more often observed in discourses against machismo than in than in the true transformation of gender roles or power relations between men and women in Peru.[31]

My research shows the continuity of a double moral standard about sexuality among urban youth in Ayacucho. However, contrary to what has been suggested with respect to the relevance of the codes of "honor and shame" to understand the systems of gender of the Mediterranean or Latin American societies (Weidman 2003), these principles are not fundamental to explain as a whole the emotions and behaviors of the young men and young women in peripheral neighborhoods of the city of Ayacucho. Honor (or respect) and shame in these places are cultural ideals of gender linked with Catholic ideals of femininity that compete with other ideals, which are appealed to but also questioned. In this contested scenario, the notion of shame is sometimes performed but not really experienced by girls, and the idea of honor of boys is not mainly related with the sexual reputation of their girlfriend.

[31] This analysis is supported by diverse studies carried out by anthropologist Norma Fuller with women and men of the middle class in Lima (Fuller 1993, 1997) and with women and men of the middle and working classes in different Peruvian cities (Fuller 2000, 2001).

Talking with the young men I interviewed about the matter, to them more than the honor associated to sexual behavior as in the women, it is about boys' reputation or prestige founded in their own attributes and capacity of conquest. Thus, the prestige gained by these young men is not founded mainly in a control of their girlfriends' sexuality, but in their cultural and social competence to play the gender game to conquer the girls. While the honor is founded in a moral code and control of sexuality of the women (Rivers 1977, 1992; Gilmore 1987; Fuller 2004), the prestige, as it is understood by my male informants, is placed in the field of social stratification based on what the persons own or what they individually manage to achieve. Peter explained to me how "a man who respects himself" is, a popular phrase used among boys, when we talked about my questions about what is more shameful and prestigious for him:

> Peter: I felt very ashamed last time when a girl I liked asked me to take her to her home after the party. I was "*aguja*", "misiooo!!"" [both expressions mean without money in colloquial language], and I just have money to pay a mototaxi.
> Carmen: I see… and how do you know that she expected you take her by taxi?
> Peter: Because when I asked her about taking a mototaxi or perhaps walking until the avenue, she said that it would be better to wait for their friends who will take a taxi. I did not have enough to pay a taxi as it would be expected at that time, in the middle of the night, if you want to give the girl a good impression. And even if she accepted taking a mototaxi, I know that girls do not like "*misios*" [boys who do not have any money or very little]. They dissimulate, but girls always are scanning you, they look at how nice is your jacket, what kind of sneakers you are wearing … also, they see if you have a bulging wallet. There are boys who "se botan" [are overconfident] because they have a motorcicle or a blackberry, uy!!
> Carmen: But most of the boys here told me that they often have a limited budget, what do you know about that? How could they go about if they were "*misios*"?
> Peter: It is truth, yes, but you work and save for that. You borrow money sometimes. A man who respects himself and also wants to be respected by girls, always must have some money in his pockets, at least 20 soles or more.
> [..] If you get respect you have prestige, it is the same for me. As I said, the most important for a man is not being "*misio*." [..] I worked since I was 14, and I always bought my T-shirts and my sneakers. By any means my father would give me money to buy liquor and drink with my friends, I have to pay it.

> Carmen: And among your male friends, which is the most important?
> Peter: To get a girlfriend, if you do not have a girlfriend or are not able to conquer the girl you like, it is like you are an "*incapaz*" (unable man)… what kind of man are you if you are not able to be appreciated by a woman?
> Carmen: And what happens if a girl cheats on you, or maybe she does not cheat on you but is leaving with someone and other people make up rumors about that? In that case, how will your reputation or your honor as a man be affected?
> Peter: My reputation???? Noooooo!! The reputation of the girl will be damaged, not my reputation. She will lose, not me, because in this case she fails, not me. I failed in the other situation that I told you. The more boyfriends, or even worst, more "*vacilones*" [for joy relationships] or "*choques*" [occasional relationships] she has, the less respectable it makes the girl seem. It is difficult to think about her as your girlfriend.[..] Then, again, she is who loses out; you as a man could not be the responsible for what she did. (Peter, 17 years old).

In a context of social changes, a context in which the sons of rural migrants are now new citizens from Huamanga (city dwellers), the ways of obtaining prestige in the city have also been rearranged. Together with the access to higher levels of education, or to have very Spanish surnames, the prestige also passes through access to be a consumer of some prestigious goods, such as fashionable clothes and modern electric appliances. It is important not only who boys are, it is particularly valuable what the boys have in terms of money and prestigious goods and what they are able to do to obtain these things, including their cultural competence to convince girls and their effort and abilities to get their own money. Even more, as their parents have a limited budget, what boys possessed depended significantly on what they were able to do, as Peter commented. Access to prestigious goods is also important as it re-position youth in ethnic and cultural local hierarchies. Ethnic and cultural whiteness (associated to the coastal people in Peru), the category placed on the top of ethnic hierarchies, is related with urban and modern goods. On the contrary, having an indigenous background, placed at the end of local ethnic hierarchies, is associated with rural and traditional garments

and technologies (see Chapter 6 about social divisions and intersectionalities). Thus, obtaining modern goods or having a fashionable look can reposition boys (and girls) in ethnic hierarchies, as they are associated with white or coastal people (culturally "white"), and in this sense are ways of "*blanquearse*," to become like the white or coastal people.

This is not to say that the young men do not feel shame or that the girls do not worry about their prestige or reputation, but whereas girls' shame and prestige are mainly located in the moral terrain still shaped by the Catholic religion, in the case of boys, these aspects are more related to their personal abilities and socio-economic resources. Thus, the reasons for feeling shame are different and preserve a division by gender of the spaces considered more relevant for boys and girls, in each case. The shame and lack of prestige of the boys are connected to their difficulty in seducing or winning over the heart of the girls. The small capacity to conquer the girls or to captivate them is associated with the lack of money ("being poor" or "*misio*") and other symbolic and materials goods, as well as with personal abilities (as to know how "*florear*"[32] , be aware to take the opportunity, or know when to use it) or with lacking in physical beauty. On the other hand, the shame and prestige of the young women is focused mainly on their sexual behavior and romantic history. The prestige of the women with whom boys could begin a long-lasting and more "serious" relation continues linked to the girls' sexual and love life and not to their access to consumer goods or cultural assets.

Thus, this research shows continuities in the association between girls' sexual behavior and their social prestige, but also, significant changes in the ways in which girls'

[32] "Florear" is a slang verb, which comes from the Spanish word for flower: *flor*. It means the capacity to maintain a captivating conversation to "convince the girl," which implies a proper control and knowledge of the language and the codes that make young men reliable and attractive to the girls.

sexuality is reframed. Likewise, my study supports the separation between boys' notions of honor and prestige, and their girlfriend's sexual behavior, whereas the basis of boys' prestige are more tied with their cultural abilities and socio-economic resources in the context of the expansion of capitalist globalization in the city of Ayacucho.

Religion in the Everyday of Youth: Changes and Continuities

Concluding this chapter, I can assert that the official religious discourse (articulated above all by religious authorities, but supported by families, schools and other institutions) about the "decent" girl was alive in the minds of youth and in a series of restrictions in girls lives. Although religious ideology about virginity and modesty did not correspond to the experiences of most of my informants, it shaped their emotions, classifications and constraints through the internalization of moral religious values (e.g. feelings of shame, disgust or guilt) or social control and sanctions (e.g., parental norms and neighborhood rumors).

The Catholic moral discourse is still valid among youth in Ayacucho but it is highly contested. The ideal of a decent and honorable girl, which comes from her virginity and modesty, is not the only one and was being questioned or was in conflict with other referents of femininity and feminine sexuality, their recent approach to sexual rights and scientific knowledge about contraception and STI, as well as with the experiences and desires of both female and male adolescents. My study contributes to the body of work about gender, sexuality and religion that shows women´s strategies for expanding their sexual and reproductive choices, and a socially negotiated morality forged in their everyday life (eg., Petchesky and Judd 1998; Ginsburg 1997; Hirsch 2008). But both girls and boys not only

reinterpreted and negotiated religious discourse about sexuality and gender, they contrasted religious doctrine with other sources of knowledge, and relativized it as one lay ideology among others that they use to make sense of their own circumstances. Even youth who are believers and active in their parishes, questioned or relativized the word of religious leaders about virginity, contraception or other themes that limited their autonomy in sexual matters. This view of the official religious discourse contrasts with the sacred and inviolable character attributed to the Catholic-doctrine norms underlying public policies on sexual and reproductive issues in Peru and other Latin American countries (Shepard 2006). This relationship between young people and religion is related, in a way, with a tendency found in Latin America called "*cuentapropismo religioso*" (believing on their own). Some consequences of this approach to religion are the lost symbolic and material significance of religious institutions and the expansion of multiple forms of Christian subjectivities across the continent (Judd and Mallimaci 2013).The negotiated character of private relationships between youth and religion broadens the cultural frameworks for girls to make sense of their sexuality before or beyond marriage, even though it could happen after intimate or interpersonal conflictive processes. However, gender inequalities and intergenerational gaps produce a series of constraints that limit girls' enjoyment of their sexuality and make choices related to their social and sexual life. Religious doctrine reproduces gender inequalities in Ayacucho and beyond. In the field of sexuality, these gender inequalities are summarized in the phrase repeated as an irremediable fact: "the woman has more to lose [than the man]", which implies that social consequences of having sexual relations are greater for women than for men since sexual reputation continues to be an important asset for women in gender

arrangements in Ayacucho. On the other hand, as part of the double standard reproduced by religion and other local institutions, heterosexual boys' sexuality is not a major concern for religious or parental prescriptions. Social prestige of heterosexual boys is not mainly in the world of the moral assets, but in the world of economic resources and prestigious modern goods. The impact of cultural and economic globalization is gendered and tends to reproduce social divisions and cultural ideologies that hierarchize girls and boys in different forms.

Besides, this chapter suggests the significance of intergenerational conflicts between parents and youth (see also Chapter 2) as a crucial factor that allows the Catholic discourse shaping the social production of the spatial organization of sexual vulnerability, and the definition of social and sexual risks of youth. In the next chapter, I will analyze how girls navigate these gender arrangements and intergenerational constraints to expand their sexual agency without being displaced to the bottom line of the social and moral hierarchies of value.

CHAPTER 5: SOCIAL HIERARCHIES AND THE UN-MAKING OF SEXUALITY AND GENDER

One day, Marylin, a 16 year-old advocate, told me that when she had travelled to Lima to visit her godmother she used to leave valuable things at her house to avoid any street robbery because in Lima there is more probability of this than in Ayacucho. Among the things she left was her mobile phone and "her dignity." "What did you leave?" I asked her. And she responded: "my virginity, I left it very well folded underneath my phone." And then she burst out into a loud laughter. Marylin alluded to an ideal woman, to a moral order, and to a geography of social and sexual vulnerability, which are relevant referents within the moral discourses of the adults, but were more directly criticized and questioned by the young women.

In the previous chapter, I analyzed the cultural and institutional influences of Catholic discourse on young people's sexuality. In this chapter, I explore another level, in which the processes of "(un)making" gender and sexuality occur in the experiences of female and male youth in urban Ayacucho, and I examine the different manners in which young people re-construct (re-make) the sexuality and gender classifications and hierarchies proposed by this religious and still influential discourse. As will be discussed below, in different spaces and in the ways of interacting with peers (including jokes, forms of self-presentation and seduction games), there is a demand for more sexual freedom for young women, while new forms of social differentiation and distinct hierarchies are (re-) created according to the diverse

expressions of women's sexual agency. In this study, I interpret young men and women as actors who resist, negotiate, and "create" the world (Ortner 1996).

In order to discern these subjects' agency and their complex interactions within the social structures and cultural contexts in which they are enmeshed, I employ the concept of "gender games" as developed by anthropologist Sherry Ortner (1996, 2006) within the framework of the theory of practice, and the contributions from the theory of bargaining exchange to examine sexuality as part of women's resources and strategies (Nathanson and Schoen 1993; Hirsch 2003) These conceptual tools allow me to identify the subtle and complex manners in which girls in urban Ayacucho exercise and broaden their agency to create meanings, express themselves and make decisions related to their sexuality.

In this chapter, I argue that these girls are skillful players of a game of "self-regulated transgressions" in which sexual desires and initiatives are exercised but in a self-regulated manner so as not to affect their long-term goals. This form of agency does not follow a dichotomy of active resistance or passive accommodation to existing sexual and gender hierarchies. Instead, girls' gender games and social exchanges demonstrate a certain ambiguity or dynamic interaction between the reproduction and transgression of gendered constraints surrounding women´s sexuality. Likewise, these girls' actions suggest a negotiation between long-term benefits and short-term sacrifices. In this sense, my findings are similar to those of the studies published by the International Reproductive Rights Research Action Groups-IRRRAG (Petchesky and Judd 1988) regarding women´s strategies to exercise their sexual and reproductive rights around the world (based on case studies carried out in Mexico, Brazil, Nigeria, Philippines, Egypt, Malaysia and the United States).

The IRRRAG found “a continuum model in which accomodative and resistant acts are linked by a large grey area in between, reflecting the specific cultural and material circumstances in which our respondents find themselves” (Petchesky 1998:17). Like the girls in my study, these women adopted complex strategies “in order to achieve some degree of autonomy and, at the same time, maintain their place in the family and community” (Petchesky 1998:17). Differing from these women, girls in urban Ayacucho belong to a generation of urban young women who are more connected to globalized discourses, means of communication and consumer markets, which provide them with new resources to signify, express and broaden their sexual agency. Before presenting the manners in which Ayacuchan girls use strategically different cultural codes to exercise agency in social interactions with their peers, I will briefly discuss my approach to the conceptual categories and theories employed in this chapter.

Playful and Serious Gender Games

For the purpose of my research, I understand the dynamics of reproduction, re-creation and transgression of gender norms about female sexual agency in young people’s daily life, particularly their interactions with their peers, as “gender games” or culturally organized social episodes that are partly scripted by cultures but pursued by gendered actors, who “play with skill, intention, wit, knowledge, and intelligence" (Ortner 1996: 12). The notion of gender games permits an understanding of girls’ agency and their objectives in established or self-made games, demonstrating their reflexive and strategic roles as participants in social life, and not as simple reproducers or mirrors of gender rules.

I critically broaden Ortner's notion of "gender games" (1996; 2006) to encompass cultural formations that are playful, especially advantageously for youth, particularly girls, to exercise their gendered agency and to conduct micro-politics in a social context that limits sexual rights (e.g., expression, access to information and services). Differing from Ortner's theory, the framework employed in this study draws upon the recreational and fun character of the game as its constitutive dimension, which lets the female teenagers be agents in the re-creation and transgression of narratives about their sexuality. This notion is not necessarily contrary to the notion of Ortner's "serious" game that maintains a distance from the connotation of game in English, which regularly connotes "something relatively light and playful" (Ortner, 1996:12). For Ortner, games' serious character stems from the inherent presence of power and inequality in them, the manners of inclusion and exclusion involved, their intensity, and serious consequences such as the rewards and punishments (Ortner, 1996:12). I argue that the young informants in this study, and particularly the girls, use playful actions (e.g., jokes, mockery, nicknames and wagers) to address "serious" themes related to their sexuality and sexual agency. These are their principle manners of interaction and creating narratives that let them formulate "serious" questions about inequity, hierarchies, and exclusion without risking elimination or losing the game, which occurs through censorship or punishment that generates more oversight and increased stigma.

Thus, the ambiguity between fun and seriousness within the game lets youth in urban Ayacucho express social criticism through transgression without breaking the rules of the game. Particularly in the case of girls, their jokes and mockery include reflexive narratives of themselves and critiques about gendered social and moral hierarchies. Their informal

comments and manners of addressing one another produce meaning, classifications and disqualifications among both genders. Their interactions in virtual social networks, wagers and other interactions in spaces of entertainment are opportunities to challenge or re-frame the rules of gender games. As noted by Eder, informal conversations including gossip, jokes and rumors are central in the construction of meanings and referents for the appraisal (or not) between peers since these are the vehicle by which membership or exclusion are re-elaborated, as well as reinforcing identities, sexual roles, and leadership (Eder 1995).

Bargaining Theory and Culturally Complex Subjects

Bargaining theory refers to games or situations in which two or more players must reach agreement; this theory contributes to understanding agents' decisions and their interactions, which are framed in terms of their resources, culturally-constructed goals, and rules (Hirsch 2003:6). I use bargaining theory to analyze sexuality as a resource, which is part of women's strategies and forms of exchanges in sexual and marriage markets (Nathanson and Schoep 1993). This analysis views gender inequalities as under negotiation and in which there are resources available to bargain, and particularly "how women use of their sexual and reproductive resources when access to other resources is limited" (Hirsch 2003: 6). My study explores how girls use sexuality as a resource in gender games in a context in which different or even opposite goals and rules coexist. This research furthers previous studies in Latin American countries (e.g., Ortiz et. al. 1988; Grilo et. al. 1988; Hirsch 2003; Sheppard 2006) regarding the manner women pursue their projects in adverse contexts and at the same time

the manner in which these contexts shape their strategies and have implications on their sexual and reproductive behavior.

Differing from economic and sociological research employing bargaining theory, I posit that people do not consistently act as rational and self-interested actors who maintain a utilitarian vision and seek to obtain the maximum efficacy with the least cost. My approach views my research subjects—youth in urban Ayacucho—as players of games as informed by practice theory, which understands them as subjectively complex actors, with culturally-constituted aims and projects, acting according to both routine practices and intentional action, and embedded in social relations of solidarity and power (Ortner 2006: 140-141).

Gender Agency: Power and Projects

In this research, I study youth "gender games" in relation to "making" and "unmaking" gender within the realm of cultural meanings and morals. Following anthropologist Holly Wardlow, also inspired by practice theory, in this study "gendered agency" is defined as "particular modes of exerting power and producing effects that are particular to women as women or men as men" (Wardlow 2006: 9), As Huli women, there are ways in which the deployment of gendered agency of Ayacuchan girls serves as cultural critique. In this chapter, I demonstrate the manners in which low-income girls in urban Ayacucho exercise gendered agency primarily through the use of symbolic resources and opportunities available to re-create and question cultural and moral categories and hierarchies habitually associated with young women's sexuality.

The categories proposed by Wardlow (2006) to distinguish between different types of women's agency are useful to analyze these girls' forms of agency in relation to the reproduction or transformation of socially-established power structures. Yet, it is challenging to use any of these categories to name the types of agency exercised by my informants due to the difficulty in clearly separate reproduction from production of sexual hierarchies and gender relationships. Girls' self-regulation to broaden their future opportunities with a potential stable partner may correspond to what Wardlow termed "proper agency" or "encompassed agency," as it contributes to the reproduction of existing cultural logics and social structures that promote and reward girls' sexual restraint. However, at the same time, these girls have pushed the limits of the game (e.g., to have sex, use sexy clothes or seduce boys under certain conditions) with the end goal of obtaining a better moral and social position so as to be able to more effectively demand mutual respect and fidelity. These girls have the aspiration to reach greater gender equity through changes in current gender relationships, allowing them to construct and exercise their gender agency in a more egalitarian manner. In this sense, this form of agency is related to Wardlow's "positive agency," as girls aim to change current forms of social relationships and broaden what they are allowed to do within the sphere of their sexuality. This combination between reproduction and change led to my rethinking manners of gender agency that capture processes of change and the ambiguous boundaries between the enabling and constraining character of culture and the game's rules, which are shaped by the complex interplay between structure and agency highlighted by practice theory. At the end of this chapter, I will return to this idea.

Additionally, I will demonstrate the manner in which girls have plans and goals related to their management of their sexual agency and sexual reputation. These culturally meaningful projects and the ability to pursue them are manifestations of the "agency of projects", which is another key dimension of agency identified by Ortner (2006) alongside the "agency of power." The agency of projects refers to ideas of intention and people's ability to enact them whereas the agency of power refers to relations of domination and resistance (Ortner 2006: 143-144). These projects or cultural goals themselves can be considered gender games emerging from and shaped by local power relations (Ortner 2006: 145). In exploring these girls' projects, sexuality is also analyzed as a goal—not simply a resource—and in their multiple articulations with the production of social life in urban Ayacucho.

In the following sections, I present some of the gender games through which low income girls of urban Ayacucho constructed narratives about their sexuality, reformulated hierarchies, taxonomies, categories and gender relations regarding sexuality and sexual agency. This analysis permits an appreciation of the diversity and tension between official Catholic religious discourse and their own perspectives and intentions. I focus on girls' forms of agency and bargaining since I had more access to speak with them, observe their experiences and some of their quotidian gender games.

Narrative Agency and the Power to Name and Classify

Cultural and moral categories such as the virgin/honorable woman versus slut/bitch dichotomy are constantly challenged and re-defined by young women through "gender games" played with skill and knowledge. These gender games of transgression and production of meaning allow the girls to critique and remake dichotomizing categories of

girls, question and normalize stigmatized categories of women, and re-create gendered categories and hierarchies. In these games, this group of girls uses language and narratives as resources to express their self and personal agency (Rymes 1996). This study identifies how these are means for girls to exercise their gendered cultural and moral agency, particularly in situations that favor playful ambiguity or complicity among peers, thus allowing them to issue cultural critiques while still remaining in the game.

Recreating and Normalizing through Jokes and Mockery

During my fieldwork, I observed that banter was a frequent and accepted manner of communication between young girls and boys in their daily interactions among peers and also with the adults on different topics and in distinct spheres. Furthermore, I found that jokes are a privileged manner of communication in approaching difficult or delicate topics among youth in urban Ayacucho, especially in relations between people located in different positions of social hierarchies. Thus, for instance, at times I was questioned about why I had no children after having been married for several years, or they asked me for a present or a favor, later stating, "just joking," but with the "serious" intention to receive something from me. In a context other than joking, asking me for personal things would have been considered as tactless and especially when made to an older person, these comments would be conceived as unusual, cheeky, or imprudent, and even cause for embarrassment.

Youth engage in a gender game in which they reformulate or normalize stigmatized or criticized situations regarding their sexual and gender behavior through joking and mockery. The implicit and primary rule of this game is to keep transgressive or criticized narratives or

attitudes in the sphere of playful situations among peers or among their group of friends. Significant differences, related to their social positions in gender and sexual hierarchies, exist between the games of girls and boys. In the case of young women joking is a way to exert a cultural and moral agency through transgression, whereas in the case of boys, joking is a manner to reaffirm cultural and moral orders in contexts where sexist ideas were strongly criticized, as they were made during the meetings and activities organized by a feminist NGO. In both cases, joking was a mean of avoiding criticism or censure.

During the times when I went with the girls on their outings or I observed them in their school surroundings, I could appreciate how they mocked the association between virginity and the special value given to a woman who is virgin. The daily jokes between young women, when they talk among themselves, gave me more insight about a reformulation of gender categories that occurs within the girls' cultures, which challenged the binary classification emanating from religious discourses and adults' warnings that distinguishes between the decent woman (relegated to the domestic sphere, honorable, virgin) and the sinner or "bad woman" (prostitute, whore, a loose woman). Some of the following examples of quotidian situations discussed with girls illustrate this form of narrative agency.

It was a rainy afternoon, the end of the day at the "Virgin of the Rosario"[33] public school for girls, and the students hastily left through the two wide open doors. Near the end of the flow, the girls from fifth grade left, pushing one another to which one responded "be careful, don't push me, I'm a virgin, I'm still valuable." And then the group laughed. As Marylin joked regarding protecting their virginity at home (see first page of this chapter),

[33] The name of the school has been changed because confidentiality issues.

these girls articulated a cultural critique to gendered social and moral hierarchies of value, and did it mainly through jokes with their female friends. Other girls repeated similar jokes when they thought about the topic in the interview or in informal conversations we had.

Likewise, these girls and their friends use deprecatory language to qualify girls both to signify in-group membership and to question existing gender and moral stratifications. They used the category "*zorra*" (slut) to name other girls who showed more initiative with boys, who easily and frequently changed partners, or who more effusively expressed happiness than others; at times, they used the term when they wanted to tease their friends. When the term becomes commonly-used among friends (who know each other very well) and departs from being an insult-used only in extraordinary situations- the category becomes "normalized", diminishing the deeply negative sense of devaluation that it has in other contexts. The use of "*zorra*" ("slut") or "*perra*" ("bitch") was also common in the social network Hi5[34], where these categories were also used in situations in which the girls pose showing some part of their bodies, such as their buttocks or cleavage. Although this social network is visited by a larger group of virtual friends and acquaintances, these were words used among female friends only. A 17 year-old informant commented about her friend, who is also another of my informants:

> Hey *zorra*, and you call me that because I am a…hahaha .. Hey girlfriend, when are you going to stop the business hahhaha(laugh) *Zorra*! How are you? Promotion 2008…class 5 D the best. Yes or no, *zorra*? (María, 17 years old)

[34] Hi5 is the name of one of the most popular social networking sites designed to help people to make more friends that also became a dating social networking site. Hi5 was the most popular social networking site among my young informants during my fieldwork in Ayacucho city (2008-2010), but currently some of them have migrated to Facebook.

Girls also used the expressions to be "*media zorra*" ("half slut") or "*casi zorra*" ("almost slut"), because it was assumed that there are several characteristics ascribed to a "*zorra*" that are also shared among the girls. In some cases, categories such as "*zorra*" acquired a definite meaning and constituted a stable identity, which mostly happened when girls refer to an abstract referent of a woman with a certain type of constant sexual behavior and ways of interacting with men. Although, many times, when girls talked about their friends or acquaintances they used the words "*zorra*" or "*perra*" (bitch) to refer to a situational identity or particular behavior. Dulia, Marylin and Clarita explained the specific situations and girls' behaviors associated with being a "zorra":

> Carmen: What are the most common words and nicknames used among girls to tease each other?
> Dulia: "*Zorra*" (slut)
> Marylin: Only between us.
> Dulia: I tell… I'll tell you. I said that to Clarita, only because she is "alegre" [expresses her happiness], almost a "*zorra"* [slut] too. When a [male] teacher is coming into the classroom, Clarita starts arranging her hair, and I told her, "And you call me a vixen?"
> Marylin: But only to tease each other, among girls.
> Clarita: Sure, these are words, insults.

My informants also used the term "*zorra"* (slut) to make jokes about pretending to be sex workers in the streets when they did not have money. An additional aspect in the joke's narrative was a union of sex workers in which one of them is the leader. This is a far-cry from reality in Ayacucho where sex work occurs in a hidden and clandestine way and it is highly stigmatized, despite being legal in Peru. Differing from the use of the word "*zorra*," the game of pretending to be sex workers was done, in front of other people who did not belong to their inner group of friends, such us a taxi-driver, the NGO personnel, people who were in the

street and in the park around where they hung out. Thus, the group's jokes move from a transgressive code within a closed group to a more public form of transgression. Pretending to be sex workers in public was something that caused discomfort to other girls who were also health advocates, who considered that this performance could confusing to people who might overhear their conversations, and thus affect the group by causing it to acquire a bad reputation.

At the same time that a particular group of girls criticized the category "*mujer digna*" ("honorable woman") through satire, being a "slut" or sex worker was "normalized". All of these girls were sexual and reproductive health advocates and students of an all-girls' school. I initially thought the idea was to provoke others by their playing and pretending to be sex workers, but later I observed that the jokes among them were repeated in a very spontaneous and natural way while they were in more public settings (e.g., in the in front of unknown people) or in intimate situations (e.g., in meetings between friends). The stigma associated with being a "zorra," or a sex worker, was eroded among these girls through their repetitive use of the term in a more routine way to label themselves.

Assuming that the appropriation of the word "zorra" (deprecatory language) could serve to signify in-group membership among girls, I asked them what could occur if someone external to their group heard what they had said. These girls replied that they were aware that they could be stigmatized because people used to say these words (*zorra* or *prostituta)* as serious insults, but they also thought that what these terms name or their connotations should not be considered bad or stigmatizing because they are simply expressions of girls' greater freedom to express themselves as sexual beings:

Clarita: If someone listens, he should listen carefully. He wouldn't be too surprised.
Carmen: What do you mean by listen carefully?
Clarita: When someone says that a girl is a *zorra* it is often because this girl is *un poco más suelta* (a little more liberated), because she expresses her feelings to a boy, or perhaps because she is no longer virgin; all of this is not bad or dirty, right? Now, most girls are "más sueltas", they are not as *recatadas* (prudish) as our mothers or grandmothers were...then now, all the girls are a little *zorras* and that's why we use this word between us.
Lucia: People also say you are a *zorra* when you look like like Marilyn with low neckline and miniskirt, zorra! (looking at Marylin), hahaha.
Marylin: But you (looking at Lucía) and all of us wear miniskirts or like to wear them at any time, right? Looking sexy is not bad; what is bad is the dirty mind of some men and women.
Carmen: And when you talk as if you work as sex workers…
Lucia: Being a prostitute is not a sin. Women who are prostitutes are also human beings... then prostitute should not be an insult, a bad word, but it is a terrible thing for most people. So we use the word to call one other as a way to say: 'hey.. if we are a prostitute, so what?'

Thus, the game described above could be considered an expression of gendered cultural and moral agency among these young women. Even in the case when they use in this way they questioned categories of stigmatized women and the heavy burden of conservative rules and norms used to control women's sexuality. These verbal games could represent a sort of defiance by these girls of the dominant moral order that establishes the rules of the game, which are still supported by adults and young men.

Within the group of boys, the jokes alluded to characteristics desired and treasured in a man by the girls, as well as those considered dangerous and negative. Banter with somebody for not having valuable qualities or characteristics as a potential partner was a way to include oneself and exclude others. Teasing about being transgressor of personal aspects that are sanctioned or socially criticized was a manner of minimize their importance, "normalize" them or place them in the sphere of ambiguity. Thus, for instance, his male friends told Lenin

"you have plenty of girls because you are a *papi* ("daddy") or *cuero* ("hunk")." Having many girls is viewed negatively by girls. Saying that "it is because you are "*papi"* or "*cuero*" is a form of justifying and normalizing this situation. About the terms *papi* or *cuero,* girls commonly used these words to mean those boys who are very attractive, in a physical sense, and sometimes they use it with a sexual connotation. Among the valuable aesthetic characteristics for girls were being seen as "*blanco*" (white), "*blancón*" (whitish)," or "blanquito" ("a little white")—different degrees of fair complexion—having light-colored eyes and being "*agarrado*" ("well built"). Lenin did not have these characteristics: he had dark skin, facial acne, which he disguised with very long hair, and he was very thin. When Ronald (who is tall, lighter complexion and medium built), addressed him as "*papi*" or "*cuero*" he was teasing him, and also his two other friends were laughing (who were as dark as Lenin and also thin, but not nearly as much as Lenin).My male informants teased some of the boys who were quiet by calling them "perverts." I observed at least five boys from the group of male advocates (around 18) who were called perverts. In one of these situations, the person in question responded, looking at the person calling him this, "who taught me?" He meant that the friend who accused him is more sexually experienced and was the one who had taught him the so-called perversions. Being pervert in this context refers to excess of sexual desires or sexual activity with masturbation being an expression of this perversion. Another common joke is about having several girlfriends when the boy in question did not have even one or had only one. When I asked them if they had a girlfriend, many responded with another question: "Which of them?" In a group, they joked about this, leaving implicit they had more than one girlfriend, or went out with several at the same time. In the individual

interview, most of them said they had one girlfriend at a time. Others, who admitted to having several partners at the same time preferred neither to affirm it nor to deny it. They left the topic in the arena of jokes, and thus maintained a certain ambiguity about the truth.

As previously mentioned, the young men interviewed considered that by nature men have more sexual desire than women. Yet, even as a biological justification for that was stated, certain regulation of one's sexuality was expected. Permissiveness regarding this depended on the different groups and persons with whom they interacted, which included female and male friends, girlfriends, the youth and NGO advocates, and parents. Particularly the boys, who participate in the NGO training as youth advocates, felt themselves more observed or open to criticism from their social environment, especially fearing the criticism from other youth advocates or the team at the NGO. Banter, or informal humorous conversations, was a manner to escape or protect oneself from this criticism, leaving the situation ambiguous while permitting them to express some of their thoughts.

Regarding the value of jokes as a mechanism to express ideas and values, I found some subtle differences between genders regarding the unstated rules regarding the use of these jokes about sexuality. The girls consulted about the subject remarked that joking is a way to challenge adult and social categories used against them. Thus, among refer themselves, their use of words such as slut or bitch was an expression of defiance and a way to express social criticism. They were very selective about who could make this type of joke or use these terms with them, despite not expressing concern about who heard how they joke within their group of peers or friends. They explained to me that was their right to do so and that the use of these words was accepted only within their group of female friends, terms that

are commonly considered derogatory in their local context. The boys were excluded from calling them “slut” or joking about their virginity. If they were to do so, the girls would react violently, as Clarita told me: “I would slap his face so hard that he will end up on the floor.” In this case, they did not admit to joking with the boys about their sexual or gender behavior because doing this would have been categorized as a “disrespectful.” They did not perceive that the boys thought as they did, and to joke with boys was to risk their possibilities of negotiation and appeal to them or other boys. In this way, their jokes within an all-girl group about sexual and gender behavior only made up a girls’ subculture that was restricted to those with the legitimate authority to joke about it. This was a manner to manage and protect the codes that they used with their female peers who were also vulnerable to moral criticism and doubts about their sexual reputation as decent or good girls.

In contrast to what occurred with the young women, the young men did not see jokes as having anything to do with a redefinition or social criticism of behaviors and sexual identities. Their jokes tend to reinforce existent social hierarchies, including those among boys, such as hierarchies of sexual appeal linked to ethnic hierarchies. The boys viewed their remarks as innocuous jokes made with the intention of having fun. I argue that this is a key strategy of their game playing, which is done to avoid criticism of their reaffirmation of gender, ethnic or other social hierarchies questioned by the group of teen advocates to which they belong. Two situations with the NGO staff that led to a debate among the boys suggested that boys used the ambiguous character of jokes to avoid being criticized by females and males outside their all-boy circle. In the first case, the boys put jokes on the bulletin board. They took the jokes from Internet, but the jokes were badly received by the female youth

advocates and the NGO worker, whose perspective was that they were all sexist jokes from a male perspective that conflicted with the information and perspective imparted by the NGO to the youth advocates. It was unacceptable to the NGO worker that being trained as advocates, they maintained ways of thinking that contradicted with their recently acquired knowledge. When I spoke to them about the matter, Lenin and Pavel emphasized that even if they were sexist jokes taken from internet, they were just jokes that did not merit much importance. At the same time, their male peers acknowledged that these boys chose to post these jokes on the informational bulletin board and made a show about doing so. The second situation emerged when Carlos stated that he perceived the NGO worker's favoritism towards the female advocates during a discussion about girls' possible intentions when they wear low-cut shirts. From his point of view, the NGO worker could have avoided a conflict or the favoring of one gender when many of the boys answered that women wear that type of clothing to arouse the boys. Carlos later explained his thoughts about what had occurred:

> One answer could have been…as we were talking in a joking mood, teasing, the girls and boys would have understood. Tatiana [the NGO worker] should have given a gracious answer and stopped the debate about it, but then she showed preference for the women, defended them, and that is wrong. (Carlos, 16 years old)

When they discussed what had happened during that meeting, the girls and the NGO worker refused to accept that the boys were joking. In this mixed group that claims to be critical of sexism, the boys couched their prejudice and their attempts to regulate and control women's choice of clothing as jokes. The use of jokes served as a mitigating factor or a justification to avoid being criticized as sexist or considered as bad advocates.

Classifications and Regulation of Sexual Agency among Peers

Girls' sexual initiation continues to be an important concern to both girls and boys, although it has relative value in the present. Young women's agency regarding their sexuality and couple relationships is actively contested and created through diverse categories by girls and boys. Whereas the terms for a slut and an honorable/decent woman were part of the jokes among some young women, others such as "*ofrecida*" (offered herself as a present), "*regalona*" (similar to *ofrecida*, whose closest English equivalent could be "cheap"), "*arrastrada*" ("groveler"), "*aguantada*" (a woman who is restrained and desperately needs to find a partner or have sex) and "*facilona*" ("loose woman") were used in a more serious manner by girls and boys to disqualify or sanction girls " excess" of sexual initiative. These categories did not deny women's sexual agency and the exercise of their sexuality but alluded to "correct" self-regulation to avoid what was considered an "excessive show" of girls' gender and sexual agency. This "excess" of girls' agency included showing interest and initiative to potential couples or partners, explicit and persistent flirting with boys, or "frequent" changes in partners and starting a new relationship "too soon" after ending the previous one. These categories about properly regulated sexual agency (e.g., "*regalona*," "*arrastrada*," "*facilona*") belong to a symbolic and social world closer and more recent than the other dichotomist categories ("*zorra*" versus decent woman), which were considered so outdated or abject by girls than they prefer to reject them and employ them in the domain of jokes, teasing, mockery and as demonstrations of their rebelliousness or transgression.

The differences between the mentioned categories were subtle, but they highlighted different dimensions and contexts in which girls' sexual behavior and romantic relationships were socially regulated and judged. "*Regalona*" and "*ofrecida*" are terms used in a context in which a girl's behavior is overly evident as taking the initiative to approach a boy who she likes ("she flung herself at him") or one with whom she wants to have sexual relations. "*Arrastrada*" and "*aguantada*" refer to a girl's lack of control over her "need" or desire to be with a boy as a couple or as a partner: "it happens when the girl has a need and cannot wait." It is used in contexts such as when a girl breaks up with her boyfriend, and then chases him and insists on continuing the relationship or equally when the relation ends, and within a short time begins a relationship with another partner. The previously mentioned categories (*regalona*, *ofrecida*, *aguantada* or *arrastrada*) can also be used in the same broad sense as "loose woman" or someone who engages in sexual relations "easily," with "anybody" or with several boys in the same period. "Anybody" can refer to a boy who is not a girl's boyfriend or not the boyfriend introduced to the family, even as the latter is not necessarily the one that she would marry. These conceptions indicate a significant change of what had previously been considered a "decent/honorable woman" based on her supposed or real status as a virgin before marriage. Now, sex is no longer strictly reproductive and "owned" permanently by one man. There is also continuity, since for girls sex must still represent a social good, which have to be deployed in a context of affect and stable relationships, rather than for individual momentary pleasure[35]. In the present, girls are being judged on the basis of with whom she

[35] Idea suggested by Jennifer Hirsch.

has sex, her reasons to do so, and the quantity of sexual partners ("if she is an experienced woman or not").

Most boys and girls accepted sexual relations within a stable couple and in which love exists, even though most of the young men and a few young women stated that they preferred that a girl remain a virgin until marriage. My female informants considered it unacceptable to have sex for money or fun, or with many boys ("with one and with a different one"), while they were open to considering girls' different circumstances or different views as summarized in the phrase: "Who are we to judge?" On the other hand, the term "too difficult" or "*rogada*" (the one who has to be begged) was also used to express distrust of girls who delayed in accepting boys who they liked. Being "*quedada*" (slow) or "pretending to be a saint" are negatives expressions because they were assumed to be false attitudes in which others pretended to be something they were not. Although, certainly the sexual agency of girls may imply withholding sexual desires or avoiding sexual initiative, it is clear that active forms of sexual agency are sanctioned or critiqued as excessive or less prestigious in girls' classifications of their peers. Categories such as "*regalona*" or "*arrastrada*" serve as means to regulate or shape their female peers' sexual agency in the way of the moderation or self-control of sexual desires.

The boys who also relativized the ideal of a female virgin from their own perspective and beyond the established categories, used other terms such as "*cualquiera*" (literally an ordinary woman, which is equivalent to "loose woman"), "*fácil*" (a girl who easily accepts a boy's sexual or romantic proposals) and "*recorridaza*" (a woman who has had many partners). These terms referred to "loose" sexual behavior and some girls' decisions to have

sexual partners. Equally seen in a negative manner were the girls who have several partners within the same period (whether that include, or not, sexual intercourse); the boys referred to them as "*tramposas*" ("cheaters") and "*jugadoras*" ("players"). These categories emerged in a discussion with the boys about girls carrying condoms and finding condoms in their girlfriend's bag.

Differing from the young women, several of the young men considered that they believed a girl was a "*cualquiera*" (loose woman) and a "*tramposa*" ("cheater") due to her apparent availability to many boys. Other boys stated this interpretation depends on a girl's attitude and behavior independent of whether she carried condoms or not. The idea of prevention of undesired pregnancy and HIV promoted by the NGO contributes to this idea. Thus, Ilich comments: "It does not tell me anything, it's merely an act of prevention. Is she cheating? Not necessarily because she is carrying a condom. Her attitude counts more: if she is with more than one boy, if she is flirtatious, if she likes to talk in a suggestive way." Although some boys added that it depends on how many condoms she carries. If several, then they are not only for prevention but because she was a cheater. The boys did not believe she could have needed more condoms with the same boy, and stated that it is easy to think she has the intention to be with more than one boy.

The girls did not use many categories to talk about boys' sexual agency, sexual behavior, or behavior towards girls in relationships. Girls' most commonly used category was "*perro*" ("dog"), considered the worst insult to a young man, which mainly comprised male disloyalty to a girlfriend, lack of commitment, and having more than one female partner at a time, and/or maintaining (or not) sexual relationships with them. Other girls used the milder

term "*jugador*" ("player") to refer to boys who demonstrate no commitment to girls, and are only with them momentarily. Among themselves, the boys did not refer to themselves as "dogs", although they some used "players". They gave it a more positive connotation, expressing cunning and capacity to seduce their female peers. When girls talked about boys' excessive lust or sexual activity, they used was "pervert"; but as previously explained, this was primarily used in joking manner. Despite the less rich repertoire of categories to talk about male sexuality, those used by girl for their male peers had less of a negative connotation.

Differing from the girls, the boys placed lesser value on male loyalty, and to the contrary, used categories that classified them negatively for remaining faithful to only one girl. A faithful boy was called "*saco largo*" ("long coat") and/or "*pisado*" ("stepped on") in reference to the belief that he was dominated by a female or under her control. These terms were used as jokes among boys. Yet, in different circumstances such as during my research interviews or classroom discussions, or in workshops with the NGO, fidelity was viewed as a value and a way to demonstrate respect for one's partner by both girls and boys.

Furthermore, the worst insults among boys are related to pejorative categories related to males sexually attracted to persons of their same sex: "*pato*" (duck), "*cabro*" (male goat), "*cabrito*" (young goat), "*maricón*" (queer), "*marica*" *(faggot*) , "*chivo*"(queer), "*roto*" (broken), "*rosquete*" *(*poof), and/or "*loca*" *(*crazy woman). These categories are used to deny or devalue a male peer's masculinity. Boys assumed that most gays are feminine or effeminate, which is partially related their experience in Ayacucho (most of the gays they know express a feminine identity in their clothes, make-up and gestures). They view

homosexuality as a negation of their manhood as it is primarily defined by a man's object of desire and his ability to seduce the opposite sex. Julio, a close friend of one of my female informants, accepted to discuss these issues with me:

> Carmen: Which is the insult that hurts you most as a boy?
> Julio: Hahaha, do you really want to know? Sorry for the words … the worst thing that someone can call me is *cabro* or *marica*.
> Carmen: Why?
> Julio: Because it means that you are not a man! If you like another man you are not a man. If you flirt with another boy, you are not a man. A man is someone who likes and conquers a woman. It is like you are a false woman or like you want to be a woman… Like the *homosexuales* who play volleyball. Have you seen them here? It is so disgusting! They talk and move their bodies as if they were girls, but this is boorish! "Oh….Carla, don't be rude, oh…!" [changed his voice and pretend to be one of the gays who play volleyball in the stadium]
> Carmen: But you know that there are gays who consider themselves masculine…
> Julio: Maybe in other places, but I do not meet a homosexual guy here who is not effeminate. Here in Ayacucho most of them, or all of them, have feminine gestures, use feminine make-up or clothes. The most scandalous move their hips as if they were women, but they exaggerate. (Julio, 16 years old)

I observed that boys rarely used pejorative categories for homosexuals as an insult among other young men in front of young women. But I knew from some of the boys, such as Julio and others, that they use these categories to reject (and disqualify) or insult somebody in aggressive situations or when they were drunk. Moreover, during the workshops, boys used the terms "*homosexuales*" or "gays" and not the other terms.. The long list of terms used to name homosexual boys contrast with the two categories the boys and their female peers used to name a girl who liked another girl: lesbian and "*machona*" (dyke). Thus, whereas for young women, classifications and hierarchies about who is valuable or is devaluated are related to girls' restraint of their sexuality; in the case of heterosexual boys, these focused on boys' supposed or real homosexual desires or identities. In this chapter, I offer a panorama of

variations, tensions and conflicts regarding the first theme, but not about the second due to a methodological need to delimit my study and the deep gender disadvantages regarding boys' willingness to share their thoughts about sexual identity, masculinity and other issues. My male informants preferred to talk about these issues "*entre hombres*" (among men).

Self-Presentation and the Ability to Seduce

Self-presentation is a significant form of youth agency for navigating ethnic, cultural and social class hierarchies in urban Ayacucho, as explained in Chapter 3. In this section, I argue that self-presentation is also an important form of sexual agency for girls and a key dimension in their gender games. Through clothing, girls produce their body and sense of self, master their presentation as young women and express their sexual agency in culturally organized interactions shaped by power relations and/or gender games, doing so with intention, ability, wittiness and knowledge (Ortner 1996; 2006).

Exploring girls' points of view about self-presentation and sexuality was a slow process because ambiguity or implicit codes were important in gender games that allow girls to expand their sexual agency without being misread. This girls' games emerged in a context where the changes in socially-established gender relations have lagged behind transformations in meanings and models of femininity. The first time that I had the opportunity to explore girls' subjectivity about clothing was an invitation to a birthday celebration of, Ruth, a 16 year-old girl trained as a sexual and reproductive health advocate by the NGO MB. Ruth invited her two female best friends (who are also advocates) and me to her house for lunch. "My mom told me there is only going to be soup," she told us. I brought a cake, which in the

end we did not eat because her cousin had given her one prior to my arrival, and they had already begun eating it. We had chicken soup, cake and jello. Linda, another one of the girls invited, asked to keep the cake and jello to take home. She complained that she had put on weight when she was in the jungle because she ate popsicles all day long. The trousers and the tight t-shirt she was wearing were tighter than ever. Knowing we were going to dance later, Linda asked us to wait for her so she could go to her house to put on a girdle and ask her mother's permission to go out. After twenty minutes waiting for her, Ruth and Dorina complained of Linda's delay. Ruth said: "Oh, if she wears miniskirt, she will kill us!" I smiled, and Dorina explained, "It is because boys will look only at her." Linda makes her appearance across the street after we called her from my mobile phone. "She looks thinner, wretched girl…I also have to put on a girdle," said Ruth. Linda was wearing a low-cut dress and looked shapely, "she looks like a *vedette* [cabaret star]," said Dorina. These girls made visible for me, the relevance of sexy dressing as girls' social asset that could increase their social prestige and value not only in the relationships between girl and boy, but in the relationships among girls. Likewise, this episode made me think about the diverse underlying meanings of dressing with sexy clothes that did not emerge during the tough and tense debate youth had months before when both male and female youth advocates talked about girls wearing "provocative" clothing. Several young men said that girls wear those clothes to arouse the men, which the girls adamantly denied.

Boys admitted that they like sexy girls but criticized what considered "too much" or "abnormal" and warned of the possible consequences for her. To the young men, the women who dress in an "abnormal" way are those who show and let others see "too much" of their

body. Boys' commonly used expression, the same as that used by adults, was that girls wear "almost nothing", exaggerating the criteria of normality mentioned. From the boys' perspective, girls' transgression of normality is one of the causes of sexual abuse or rape. Clothes which show "an excess" of a girl's body would not only provoke the senses and masculine instincts, but is interpreted as sending a sexually suggestive message. For some of the boys the message is obvious as expressed in their question: "What else can you think of these girls?" In other words, there is only one meaning or intention possible in this message. The young men described their male peers as more impulsive than women, with less control over their sexuality than the young women, and for that reason they could do something "crazy." The boys interviewed distanced themselves from other young men who could not control themselves when "provoked." They considered that the training or education received as youth advocates on women's rights contributed to restraining these difficult-to-control urges. Carlos stated:

> But women, knowing how men are, should wear normal clothing, wear normal attire, and now they are showing everything. Women go out on the street with almost no clothes. And it could happen that the men who see her, and who did not receive this type of education [training in gender equity and sexual rights], maybe, sometimes commit rape, and then the woman complains. It is like saying when a man does not receive that kind of information and sees a girl dressed with her mini skirt and low-cut t-shirt, a very pretty girl, what can he think? It is very appealing to him, provoking, and if she walks down the same street everyday, he follows her and seeks the appropriate moment to commit his "madness." And then women complain after that. Well, that's how I think. (Carlos, 16 years old)

Other boys, such as Pavel, accepted that girls could dress in a "provocative" way but only in certain places, such as a party, where they are not in danger. It is acceptable that they dress like this in these events and would not risk rape by doing so. He stated:

> Women can dress like that in an appropriate location – wear this type of clothing. It can be the party, but not on the street. (Pavel, 17 years old)

In the meeting organized by the NGO, the young women denied that wearing certain clothes had anything to do with their desires to sexually provoke others and said it was more about to seeing oneself as attractive and feeling good themselves "because of their self-esteem." The NGO advocate supported this discourse and associated it with women's self-esteem and the rights of women to express themselves. In informal conversations, some girls explained that what boys stated it was exaggerated and in the NGO setting, they only mentioned what was politically correct, based on that learnt about self-esteem in the NGO sessions. For these girls, denying any intention of looking sexy or being attractive to men was related to the importance of maintaining a good sexual reputation, particularly in a context in which boys challenged the young women to admit that they "liked to provoke men."

The girls' discourse in spaces created, and to certain point, regulated by the NGO, was not the same as it was experienced in other situations. Yet, it also did not precisely correspond with boys' speculations regarding signals, which they interpreted as a sort of suggestiveness or "permission" by the girls to have sexual relations. For girls, sexy self-presentation was clearly a form of sexual agency and they were aware of both the power of being sexually attractive and the potential "risk" of being misunderstood as loose girls. Due to this, girls did not perceive that their self-regulation of their sexual initiative (e.g., not being a "*regalona*" or offering herself to boys) as contradictory to feeling and seeing themselves as "sexy" and being actively sensual, either in the "real" world or in the virtual one of the social

networks. If on one side, there was a display of sensuality and initiative showing their bodies or trying to be suggestive, on the other, girls established their own limitations as self-regulators, or what they counterbalance with the "decency" or "innocence."

For most of the girls, looking sexy was not an explicitly or openly recognized ideal probably because the social expectation of control and moderation was still valid. Yet, the use of sexy clothing was integrated with the idea to find oneself attractive, young and modern. Thus, for example, Cristina said that looking pretty was to be "dressed well, make oneself up, and dress with the tight trousers and everything." Apart from some exceptions, girls preferred clothes that enhanced the shape of their bodies. Tight T-shirts and tight jeans were girls' favorite garments. Low-cut dresses, miniskirts and shorts (hot pants) were also popular, especially when they went out to dance or went for a walk. In their preferences, "a voluptuous body" (voluptuous breasts and hips) was admirable, and they liked to have tiny waists.

During my fieldwork, I learnt to recognize in the peripheral neighborhoods who could be a "*señorita*" (a single usually young woman) and a "señora" (a married woman) through their clothes and in general, their personal appearance. Celina, a 19 year-old participant of one of the NGO workshops about sexual health, pointed out with particular clarity about women's self-presentation providing signs about femininity, age and spinsterhood in her neighborhood. She and I talked at her mother's *bodega*, a small grocery shop, that her mother had set up at the entrance of their home. Celina was wearing a loose jogging suit, no make-up and her hair was messy. She was looking after her little sister who appeared intermittently to ask for candy. Her mother, having some emergency, suddenly left her in charge of the house and the

shop. After a boy who came to buy bread left, Celina commented: “oh, how embarrassing, today I’m total.” To be “total” was a local way of saying having a bad day. She explained:

> Just now, when I’m not properly made up, this boy, who I like, arrives. Sometimes I am very messy, disheveled, for that reason I consider myself less feminine; I have seen very feminine girls, dressed right, made up, well cared for dress with a tight trousers and everything… Sometimes when you are disheveled, nobody takes notice of you. And also because of this, I don’t know his name, he may think “like, she has children, husband, a very sloppy girl, she looks very ugly,” and no, it is not the real situation. On the contrary, I would have been better dressed, kept up my personal appearance, then, I would have looked like a single lady.

Certainly, the girls interviewed were radically different from their mothers in their clothing and personal appearance. Their mothers were women whose age ranges between 30 and 40 years old. Most of them were migrants from rural areas, where they had lived as children. They did not wear *polleras* (traditional Andean long skirts) as did their mothers (my informants’ grandmothers), but their clothes were more discrete than their daughters’. It was common to see them wearing a blouse buttoned to the top or a cotton T-shirt, with a skirt or loose trousers. Some wore jogging suits or dresses. They generally wore plain color garments and no make-up. Some of them braided their hair or put it up in a bun. Because of these clear differences between single girls and their mothers, the young women complimented the clothing of Zulema and Raida, two young mothers, on the occasions when they wore fashionable and tight outfits. Their opinion was shared bye the NGO worker who commented her satisfaction with the new appearance of these two young women who looked previously looked *descuidadas* (disheveled). In this case what was being highlighted was how even though they were mothers, they were still young women. Zulema and Raida confirmed to me that sexy clothes are not for “señoras,” even if they are young. However, there are exceptions,

they explained to me that they only wear “moderately sexy clothes” on special occasions like a party, as they are aware that it was not proper for them and it could be misunderstood by their partners and other people.

The girls’ personal appearance and wearing of tight and low-cut clothing was a sign of generational and cultural change relative to their mothers. Yet it is not only a matter of dressing up according to the current moment and fashions. The young women understood the power of seeing themselves as attractive; they proved it with the boys and their friends in “gender games” in which they were agents and displayed their sexual agency. For instance, one afternoon in a bar, Linda bet Ruth that a boy who was with his girlfriend would look at her: he “will look at me, at that point that the girlfriend will complain to him.” Linda was wearing a low-cut dress that showed off her large breasts. Ruth thought, “the boy was besotted,” spellbound with Linda’s low-cut neckline. Nonetheless, it was very clear this was “a game, just for fun” because they would not have anything “serious” with a boy who they met in those circumstances. They would not go out with him and even less, have sexual relations with him. They remarked that the embodiment of an attractive or sexy girl was not to be a sexual or “easy” (loose).

Girls used clothing as a key to construct and perform their sexual agency; a sexy dress served to express their demand for admiration, control the gaze of others, and redefine their sexual space. Celina was one of the more explicit and confident girls who believed in the power of a sexy self-presentation. She used to go to discotheques with her friends to bet that some specific boy would ask her to dance and become interested in her; either he looked at her, or she looked him and took the initiative. These bets went from large sums of money for

their budgets such as 50 soles (at that moment they earn 16 soles per day in a program of urban state work) to a 3 to 5 Peruvian Sol drink. One thing that gave her security to make this type of bet was her clothes; she was sure to get the attention from the boy she saw and would not lose her money. Wearing a miniskirt and a small top was attractive clothing ("dressed well") for a discotheque. Celina received the boy's attention and admiration several times. She stated:

> Oh, yes, we use to place bets. To be with Luis Arturo, I bet a friend. I said, "I like that boy and he's going to be mine." My friend said "no." "How much do you want to bet?" "Fifty soles." "OK." I took my time, but at the end he fell for me, and she paid. And it happened several times at the discotheque; she told me "that boy is looking at you." "Ok, I'll grab him for myself." "Ok." "How much?" "A drink" [5 Peruvian Sols]. And boys asked me to dance. It is because I was dressed well with a miniskirt and a small top, and suddenly the boys liked me, immediately.

Celina and the other girls were conscious of the purpose, explicit or not, of being seen as attractive to get boys' attention and "gain importance" in their eyes, especially when the possibilities to meet them multiplied in the context of a party, a bar, a school trip, a sporting event, or other social spaces. A sexy dress made girls powerful and the "main" gender game seemed to be the competition, shown through betting, among girls. These games took place in situations where the ties with other young women were more stable and stronger than those with the boys who they recently had met and in relations in which she was just pretending to prove her power and attraction or were occasional one-night stands. Nevertheless, this game with the boys could be taken seriously, or become serious when some girls established stable relationships with boys who they had met in a betting game, even if this was not their primary initial motivation.

The boys also bet with their friends in similar situations as those narrated by the girls. The difference is that looking sexy was not the main element, although being seen as a "*papi*" ("daddy") or "*cuero*" ("hot") is a factor that helps to win the bet. They appealed to their skill to convince or conquest the girl using a language and stories considered appropriate to women ("*el floreo*", deriving from the world flowers generally means talking someone up or flattering them)). The boys additionally displayed economic resources, some skill such as dancing or singing, and/or used valuable or fashionable goods and garments.

Messages and Visual Images in the Virtual World: Sexy but Innocent

The social networks on the Internet, in which many of the participants' profiles were of public access, were places where young women and young men interacted, shared photos, and gave and received comments. Most of these comments were about the pictures displayed and focused mainly on the girls' physical appearance. In this virtual world, the girls displayed what I call their "textual agency," or the agency to produce texts about themselves and their capacity to wield power through these texts. Girls used their preferred clothes and poses with other people and in chosen contexts in a manner that sometimes greatly differed from their image in the real world. The "model" poses were abundant, which included close ups, part of their breasts in a tight t-shirt or low-cut blouse, or focused from behind as they slightly hiked up their skirts, or sensually modeling clothes. To produce this effect, the camera is often angled to enhance the desired part of one's body and thus, there are several pictures taken from above or from below. Here a recurrent "gender game" was to represent themselves as a "sexy-baby" or a "sexy-little girl" (as her admirers/ friends called her in the social network), commonly performing an "innocent" gaze or tender expression in the face while they posed

showing these parts of their bodies. Furthermore, girls used to write a text to contrast or justify their sensual images. These texts contextualized and served as a counterweight to what their male and female friendship network could interpret as an exaggerated incitement or transgression. Other girls preferred to characterize themselves with a serious or defiant gaze while others simply put pictures of places visited with male or female friends or their partner.

The virtual space gave girls more possibilities to express their bodies with freedom and playfulness of a sexy model. For example Kimberly, a girl who went to the Mormon Church wore clothes which covered her shoulders, but in this virtual medium, she posed with jeans and strapless t-shirts, and put a text below her picture: “here I am, walking the catwalk in my room…how many points do I score…?” Certainly, especially in the case of girls, the Hi5 social network was a sort of catwalk or shop window where they were able to receive flattering comments from girls or boys about how pretty, attractive or desirable they appeared. “With that stunning body you are going to go far,” wrote an admirer to Cristina. Others declared their love for her, wrote her poems and complimented here despite her stating she had a boyfriend, who wrote her on the same page. Differing from other public profiles I had seen in the past, in the case of Hi5 the study participants did not receive extremely explicit proposals or comments from the boys, or much that the girls could qualify as irreverent or impertinent. This is probably because their virtual social networks were organized with acquaintances and friends from their local surroundings who possibly could be ashamed to meet face-to-face with the girl or with friends in common. However, virtual social networks are also a medium in which it was possible to openly criticize what was considered an excessive display of one’s body or an overly daring sensual pose, especially from the girls. If

the girls themselves did not consider moderation in the exhibition of their bodies, their female friends criticized them virtually or in person. For example, in one message Lucia criticized Marylin on her Hi5 page because she showed her breast in the picture and made jokes about her sweet expression, not concealing that she considered Marylin a "*zorra*":

> Frieeeenddd w[hat a]…pretty, even you LOOK CALM. IF I DIDN'T know you….hahaha… "*zorra*" (slut)! You have to change … you showing all the time… Good luck friend, I hope you are ok…… [Lucia's comment to a picture of Marylin with a sweet expression on her face wearing a revealing low-cut dress].

Occasionally, the girls were one step ahead of the critics and placed a defensive text alongside their pictures. For example, Marylin put a photo where she poses wearing her blouse unbuttoned, and underneath she wrote, "Oh, what a depraved person I am, I am like that, and if you don't like it is your problem, OK." The virtual world is a space were girls were able to represent themselves, and felt relatively more free to show and experience the power of a modern and sexy look, which is admired and commented on by both boys and girls, than they had in the real world. In addition, girls were confident that their parents or other significant adults will not access to their pictures and talks in internet. Thus, they considered the virtual world as a relatively safe and private space to express themselves sexually. However, girls' virtual and real worlds are mutually interconnected. As in the real world, girls used different strategies to play the game of producing sexy representations of themselves without being judged as indecent. In this case, girls employed a series of textual resources to manipulate cultural codes about femininity and morality in urban Ayacucho.

"Afterward… it's your dark past that follows you": Self-Regulation of Sexual Desire and Initiative

The apparent paradox of seeking more—yet, not too much—gender and sexual agency in a gender game of "regulated transgressions" shows the dynamic relations among girls with agency, their cultural logic, and the social structures that shape the forms of power available to girls. If sexual agency of youth refers to their capacity to make meaningful decisions about issues related to their sexuality; girls' self-regulation of sexual desires and sexual initiative can be considered also a form of their agency to meet their future projects within a context of very limited alternatives for overcoming social hierarchies and inequalities. As I illustrate below, sexual reputation is as a valuable resource that girls expect to bargain in stable relationships to achieve more equal conditions in their demands for boys' respect and loyalty. This occurs in a context in which girls' cultural expectations about virginity and submissiveness are changing, but economic opportunities and gender relations remain disadvantageous for women. As Nathanson and Schoen (1993) asserted, girls' strategies reveal not only their goals and resources, but also the cultural, social and economic conditions which constrain the resources available to them.

Many female interviewees explained that calling a girl a "*regalona*" ("offered herself"), "*ofrecida*" ("cheap") and "*arrastrada*" ("groveler") not only alluded to an excess of interest in boys, but to an imbalance between the genders in their efforts to seduce and conquer, which gives too much power and importance to young men. Not being an "*facilona*" ("loose girl") and not having sexual relations with more than one boy or with "anybody" were

sustained by a gendered moral hierarchy similar but less restrictive than the dichotomizing hierarchy of the honorable versus indecent woman (the previously explained "*zorra*" or slut). Girls sustained a "preventive" logic, based on their social position and personal experiences in gender games. This rationality justifies short-term sacrifices for long-term benefits, which means limiting their sexual desires and initiatives to avoid being classified as a loose girl, and diminish their social value and moral prestige for future negotiations in the marriage market. Their sexual prestige not only is a key asset in their bargaining in these games, but also underlies their ideas about what constitutes an "excess" in women's sexual desires and sexual initiative. This dynamic creates a situation in which what Bourdieu calls "a practical sense" emerges from these social agents' actions; the "feel of the game" orients their perceptions of the situation and allows them to anticipate to potential consequences (Bourdieu 1990; 1998).

Through their personal experiences and those of their female relatives and peers, my female informants learned that the young women are socially more vulnerable when they publicly demonstrate an "excess" of agency to initiate relations, choose partners, and/or maintain multiple sexual and non-sexual relationships with their male peers. Jaqui, a 17-year old participant of the NGO workshops, told me about her sister who when she had problems with her husband was often confronted with her "flaw" of having had sex with men before she met him. Another of the advocates, 19 year-old Rafaela shared the story of a female classmate who had several partners or casual relations ("*agarres" or* "hook-ups") for fun or economic gain. She said that the boys "don't respect" this girl. In other words, men only wanted to have sex with her and dumped her soon after. This lack of respect could also lead to physical violence; she stated how one of this girl's colleagues slapped her during an argument. These

stories are alluded to with the phrase "afterward…it's your dark past that follows you." The "excess" in the young women's sexual behavior and "pairing" are have consequences for their future relationships, including the man they will marry or establish a stable relationship. Rafaela summarized what she considered practical cultural knowledge with great relevance for girls' lives:

> …she told us "I'm going out with him tonight; he has money" and in the end she came to tell us; she was proud. She was a crazy girl, but… always when you have your partner, like they say, your dark past follows you. This claim will follow you all the time.

Yet, not all the girls considered the need to avoid "excess" of female agency. Instead some of them critiqued these ideas and pointed out the gender injustice involved. However, it is clear that controlling or denying "excesses" of female agency were girls' strategies to preserve their social prestige as a valuable resource, which they might possibly need in the future to prevent "a lack of respect" or have later regrets.

These strategies were shaped by a combination of freedom and constraints that formed a part of the practical cultural knowledge and skills that girls' learned in their everyday interactions and relations in urban Ayacucho. Luz, a 19 year-old participant of the NGO workshops, describes the manner in which the importance of girls' self-regulation was confirmed in their experiences with partners and within their social networks., all of this beyond the new discourses they learned with the NGO and what she really believed. Luz told me informally that even though she disagreed with her boyfriend regarding the importance of virginity, she did not tell him that she was not virgin and what she really thought about

virginity because she understands that her supposed virginity made her more valuable for her boyfriend:

> For my current boyfriend, it [virginity] was important. I don't know why. He told me that he had a girlfriend who, while being with him had [also] been with another boy, and had relations with the other and also had relations with him. And he told me, "That girl was a '*cualquiera*' (loose woman); that person I only used her because she had sexual relations with other men. If she were a virgin as you, I would have valued her, as I value you. I respect you because I was been the first one [to have sex with you.] And because you were virgin, you receive respect." "Oh, yes." Well, that's what he told me.

Moreover, Rafaela suggested that neither normative principles about virginity nor cultural ideas about an excess of female sexual agency capture the diversity and complexity of intentions and situations of girls and boys when they establish sexual or romantic relationships. However, it was agreed that self-control of female sexual desires or simulating it, is a key dimension of their strategizing to improve their positions in negotiations with future partners. Other girls also indicated with more detail that the most important aspect that they envisioned negotiating with their future spouses was mutual sexual fidelity. The capacity to make demands, lodge complaints, and being heard were dependent on considering their husbands' demands. Rafaela explained:

> It depends on who you do it with… depends on which person. There are different cases, too: girl who does it for fun, another for money, many things… How can I put it?… I think I'm nobody to judge, but maybe it's not good and it's bad. Even the same girl, how many have used her to have fun? Boys are with them and get what they want and then leave them. So you don't see respect for the girl. I also have heard of cases… when you go out with one boy and you were with other, maybe because even you didn't want to, but maybe this boy didn't love you, and you did love him, considered him as serious but he did not [do the same], so you are with more than one [partner]. And then it happens that later you are with him as a couple, and he knows it [you were with others], he always will complain to you… "if you have been like that, what are you complaining for?" This claim follows you forever, if he is annoyed or something

> he says: “But what are you complain to me about?” Something like that. More to prevent [future complains], I would say.

The Peruvian anthropologist Norma Fuller’s work shows the importance of sexual modesty for urban women in the Peruvian cities of Lima, Tarapoto, and Iquitos (Fuller 1993, 2000, 2003). In much the same manner as most of the young men and women in my research, she found that women considered their sexual behavior (and its implications for their reputations) could not be entirely separated from their personalities. Thus, even when a girl does not believe that her sexual behavior determines their social value, it is still “an asset” which gives her better opportunities to get a “good partner” because she will be more valuable to potential suitors. At the same time, for women, marriage is still an important mean to increase their social status, as men has more opportunities to access to more prestigious positions and economic resources in the labor market than women. Fuller posits:

> This could be explained, among other factors, by the fact that feminine sexual behavior is still a way to symbolize women’s value in the conjugal market, and as for most of Peruvian women, access to prestigious positions is mediated by matrimony (since it is the men who transmit social recognition to their spouses), modesty or a good reputation have a great weight (Fuller 2004: 201, my translation).

From what has been shown in this chapter, in urban Ayacucho, young women’s value and social prestige are directly related to their sexual behavior. However, some variations are observable. Youth, and particularly young women, were more open than adults about girls’ sexual relationships, but the level and characteristics of female sexual agency conferred greater or lesser recognition and legitimacy to women and become a dimension of power in local gender relations (Bourdieu 1980). Young men posited girls’ “moderate” and “justified” (for love) sexual desires. In all the cases, prestige stratified the young women differently from

that occurring with young men. These divisions emerged based on their initiative, experience, and public expression related to sexuality and specifically to sexual initiation, establishment and change of partners, quantity of stables and casual partners. Consequently, the categories regarding young women's sexual behavior were used to classify them in moral hierarchies, which consequently make it possible to include or exclude them from certain types of couple relations. Recalling Rubin's (1984) analysis, this form of social stratification creates different systems of sexual value that give moral complexity to sexual acts, which are considered good or acceptable, whereas the others are viewed as immoral or unacceptable side are seen and lack any emotional overtone. Even more, the intersection between affect, stability in relationships, and young women's sexual practices complicates Rubin´s system of moral stratification. It is not just a moral hierarchy where for girls, sex for love is respected, and sex for pleasure is worthless. Rather, it also should be sex that fits into girls' life plans, but it is valuable even if those plans are a long term intimate relationship that may not necessarily lead to marriage or procreation. The criterion of value seems to be that sex is valuable as long as it fit into a relationship, even if the relationship is not going to lead to marriage. For instance, a young woman who had sexual relations with her boyfriend was categorized in consideration of the emotions and motivations involved in the relation with her sexual partner. It took into account if the girl engaged in sexual relations because she was in love, or if she was deceived or seduced by his boyfriend. In both cases, a girl could "lose" less value if she had sex with her boyfriend versus another girl who did the same with someone who was not her stable partner. On the other hand, the emotional context and the motivations for having sexual relationships were not considered if the relationship was casual and the couple did not have a

formal bond. It was assumed that in these circumstances this was a kind of sexual relation that placed the young woman in a lesser stratum than if it were in a context of a loving relation (with her boyfriend). In this latter case, the girls would be qualified as loose, a groveler. Conventionally, girls who were involved in casual or occasional relations were criticized for what was considered an excess of sexual desire (or lack of sexual restraint) and attributed with a general lack of self-respect.

Thus, in urban Ayacucho, even when girls do not believe that virginity and in general sexual behavior, determine their social value, the regulation of their sexual desires is still considered a valuable dimension of their body and self, and an asset which gives them better opportunities to find a "good partner" and bargain for equal rights within her relationship.

Transgressions and Self-Regulation: Tensions and Balance in Gender Games

This study shows girls' gendered cultural and moral agency as demonstrated in their critiquing and remaking dichotomizing categories of women, manners to take initiative with their male peers, and images related to women's decency, dignity and the personal value. Nevertheless, the new and renewed constructions of gender and sexuality (such as "*regalona*" or other categories reifying regulated sexual agency) still maintained commonalities with older constructions, particularly the appeal to regulate forms of sexual agency related to female initiative and sexual desires. More than just interpreting this continuity as the persistence of an ideology of gender inequality among girls, my perspective is closer to Hirsch and colleagues' (2012) approach to sexual reputation as part of gendered sexual identities, in which "people build and protect," and "make good sense within particular social and moral worlds" (Hirsch et al. 2012: 92-93). Girls have incorporated the notion of self-

regulated sexual agency as part of their views about what constitutes a valuable woman in moral and social terms. Likewise, they have developed a sort of "practical sense" to avoid what could be considered morally and socially "excesses" in their critical comments about virginity, sexy self-presentation, or their sexual behavior. This practical sense is not only the result of a socialized subjectivity or the internalization of current external structures; it is also the result of a reflexive and intentional agency of girls to think critically about and to monitor their own everyday actions and opportunities, and learn from other women's experiences.

Moreover, sexuality related assets for girls not only represent a manner to pursue other aims, but also goals intersecting with broader projects (Hirsch et al. 2012). According to Ortner, the latter would correspond to a second major mode of agency (together with the "agency of power"), which is the "agency of projects" or the agency of "intentions, purposes, and desires formulated in terms of culturally established projects" (Ortner 2006:144). Analyzing the intentions of girls in quotidian gender games allows for an understanding of their gender and sexual agency as part of their broader projects and strategies, which are articulated within and for diverse and even opposing local cultural narratives and forms of power. Examining girls' projects (or the "agency of projects") shreds light on a key tension in their gender games to express and expand their sexual agency in a context where a double moral standard for women and men is still valid. The girls' gender games appear to conciliate short- and long-term culturally desirable goals in their interactions, and which are related to apparently divergent models of femininity. One of these girls' projects is oriented to being a "modern" (less rural, more urban and even cosmopolitan) girl who is open to urban and transnational models of non-submissive femininity, fashion and lifestyles, being "sexy" or

sexually attractive, and demanding equal opportunities and rights. A more long-term project is having a stable partner (a fiancé or husband) and a relationship in which they as women could demand similar rights, particularly regarding sexual fidelity and respect. Preserving sexual reputation is understood as a key manner to ensure this kind of marriage. Being sexy is a valued identity for girls and a reason to be admired by peers in a context where mass media and markets associate sensuality with beauty, modernity and youth. Girls did not identify with dichotomizing categories of women (the decent woman versus the slut), as proposed by an older moral order that promotes female virginity and passivity. However, they were concerned about certain regulation of their sexual desires and sexual initiative, one that would not diminish their future options to find a husband who could contribute to their economic security and even, to their social mobility, and respects them as a partner with similar rights and ability to voice their demands. The challenge to reconcile relatively new discourses about being modern and equal citizens with the same sexual rights, and older social hierarchies and inequalities still shaping their social relationships, is also faced by boys in a different way. Although it was not possible to go in depth about the kind of tensions they face, it was evident the boys' interest of not appearing as chauvinist or homophobic, and at the same time, their difficulties to accept girls' sexual initiative and gender agency. As Hirsch (2009) showed in her study about Mexican men, this fracturing of previously hegemonic discourses about gender and sexuality implies a series of negotiations and tensions that both men and women must face in their quotidian relationships with their partners and their peers.

These girls' future goals, and the involved bargaining, are not primarily or uniquely related to economic security and social status as other studies in Peru with adult women have

found (see Fuller 2004) and research with young women in other latitudes and periods (see Nathanson and Schoen 1993). These girls demanded better conditions to negotiate a more equal relationship with their future stable partner. In this sense, these girls' expectations regarding their future partners are similar to the companionate marriage hoped for by younger Mexican women in the research carried out by the anthropologist Jennifer Hirsch, and this perspective forms a part of their larger project of being modern women (Hirsch 2004). These girls in Ayacucho have learned to manage formerly dominant goals, such as those supported by the religion, school and other institutions) with modern objectives for their gender. Even as my informants believe in the discourse of gender equity and sexual rights disseminated by the NGO and these compose a part of their aims, these girls also understand that in order to attain these goals in their personal lives, they have to play with the unequal rules of the game regarding women's sexuality that remain valid in their immediate surroundings.

The forms of girls' agency examined in this chapter demonstrate the dynamic relationships among agents, their cultural logic, and the social structures that shape their resources and opportunities, as it highlights Ortner's approach to practice theory. Young women's greater agency in their relationships with future partners (e.g., demanding sexual fidelity and gender equity) implied a decrease in or regulation of their sexual desires and sexual initiative in the present (e.g., avoiding showing "too much" sexual initiative). These girls' strategy seems to avoid being "too openly" sexy or being sexy "without moderation." This trade-off is understandable within the framework of women's positions in local hierarchies of gender and the significance given to sexual reputation to bargain more equal relationships with future stable partners. Based on the experiences of the young women

interviewed, engaging in sexual relations with "anybody" or with multiple partners modified or altered this possibility. The respect and dignity associated with the control of feminine sexual desires is considered a valuable asset in the local sexual market. Likewise, girls' potential social mobility[36] remains associated to a "good" marriage as the labor market reproduces gender inequalities; and within a context of poverty (see Chapter 2), girls did not consider it realistic to expect to obtain significant economic advancement or complete independence as adults, even as they imagine themselves having a profession and earning their own income.

The coexistence of liberal discourses about gender equity and the persistence of conservative and authoritarian institutions advocating the sexual control of women and legitimizing a gendered double morality in places like urban Ayacucho and other areas of Latin America (see Shepard 2006), configure girls' strategic agency. This agency allows them to manage ambiguity and appearances with skill and employ sophisticated codes to transgress and challenge existing rules without losing or being expulsed from the game. To analyze this form of agency I build on and go further to Ortner's and Wardlow's contributions about gender games and gender agency for understanding subalternized and invisibilized forms of women's agency. By contrast to Ortner's (1996; 2006) approach to gender games, the framework of my research recovers the recreational and fun character of the game as a constitutive and potentially transgressive dimension of gender games, which allows the female teenagers exercising their cultural agency in the re-creation and challenging of narratives about virginity and girls' decency. Jokes are the main way that girls can use to

[36] See Narayan and Petesch 2002 (p. 463) regarding social mobility in situations of poverty.

manage constraints, aggression and danger without being sanctioned or associated with "loose women."

The categories proposed by Wardlow (2006) to distinguish between different types of women's agency are in relation to the reproduction or transformation of socially-established power structures. Instead, girls' gender games and social exchanges demonstrate a certain ambiguity or dynamic interaction between the reproduction and transgression of gendered constraints surrounding women´s sexuality. (Self) regulation of active forms of sexual agency by girls or their social networks—even among those girls more critical about discourses on virginity—can be understood as a sort of pragmatic assessment of the political economy of women's resources and opportunities. This is a form of agentic self-regulation to play existing gendered games, a strategic move to assist their achievement of future projects in a context shaped by systems of inequality and prestige that limit girls' opportunities and autonomy. Within the concrete relations established by young women, a female's sexual reputation serves as a type of moral capital that can influence or mediate her social position in the other hierarchies and forms of social differentiation. In some cases the categories that downgraded women due to their sexual behavior or initiative are associated with an attributed racial or cultural inferiority or to their position in the social class structure, as will be examined later in the text. In the next chapter, I will analyze how different forms of representation and social organization are added or intersect to these forms of sexual stratification.

CHAPTER 6: GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND INTERSECTING SOCIAL CLASSIFICATIONS AND HIERARCHIES AMONG YOUTH

Social hierarchies in the sphere of sexuality (e.g., based on girls' sexual behavior or on sexual orientation) and gender are added on to or interrelated with racial, cultural, geographic and social class hierarchies and forms of inequality in urban Ayacucho. These connections were observed in an *official* discourse—influenced by Catholic moral doctrine and supported by the Catholic Church, schools, and parents—as well as in the narratives and everyday life experiences of the young people.

To address the complex interrelations among different forms of social division among youth, I draw on the concept of "intersectionality," which was coined by the African American feminist, Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989). The notion of "intersectionality" can be used to examine how different categories of differentiation and discrimination interact on multiple levels. These categories are socially and culturally constructed, and they are intertwined in the configuration of social structures of oppression (Crenshaw, 2005), as well as in the social position of individuals and social groups. It is also possible to understand intersectionality as a theoretical premise under which it has been assumed that race, gender, class and other social structures could be remade and influenced mutually. In this text, I use the concept of intersectionality to analyze the relationship among the processes of classification and the hierarchies of gender and sexuality present among heterosexual youth (who defined themselves in this way) with other forms of differentiation and social inequality present in Ayacucho's society (as well as in other parts in Peru).

Drawing on intersectionality as an analytical tool, I examine the ways in which local hierarchies and inequalities interact with meanings and practices related to sexuality and sexual agency among youth in Ayacucho. An important manifestation of these interactions is the different meaning and value given to some forms of girls' sexual agency (e.g., taking initiative in seeking a sexual or romantic partner) depending on their social position as differentiated by gender, sexual orientation, geographic and racial-cultural background. For example, the "black" women or the c*holas* (women of Andean background) are described in certain moments or spaces as a group of women with low prestige due to their sexual behavior or supposed excess of sexual agency. As a result, the femininity of these women is constructed in connection with their belonging to an ethnic group considered socially and culturally inferior. Likewise, in this chapter, I analyze other ways in which diverse axes of inequality and social differentiation overlap in shaping social exclusion and stigmatization of youth. For instance, urban youth discriminate against girls with an indigenous background or with rural cultural attributes when choosing friends or relationship partners. Their social position in ethnic hierarchies becomes an indicator of different forms of discrimination and marginalization.

An important conclusion of this chapter is that there is a mutual relationship between sexual hierarchies and other forms of social divisions. These relationships are expressed in interdependent social inequities produced in the field of sexuality, and in the sexualization of forms of social exclusion and discrimination. Sexuality is not only an outcome of other social structures (Rubin 1984; Connell and Dowsett 1992), such as gender and ethnicity. It is a domain of structure organizing social relations with "its own politics, inequities and modes of

oppression" (Rubin 1984: 143), such as heteronormative privileges and homosexual stigma. Sexuality is also a source of cultural meanings and moral divisions that serves to legitimate other local social structures and forms of inequity, such as racial, cultural and territorial hierarchies. The hypersexualization or "excess" of sexual desires became a language to express racial and cultural discrimination, as well as homophobia, in a context in which a discourse about sexual rights, sexual diversity, and the backward character of racism has been disseminated among youth who participated in this study. The ways in which local social divisions organize youth practice mediate and re-signify the connections of youth with globalized discourses about sexual rights, gender and ethnic equity, that in Ayacucho are mainly disseminated by some NGOs and local social movements of women.

Interdependent Inequalities, Social Exclusion and Stigma

The boys and girls in urban Ayacucho participate in "gender regimes"[37] (Connell 1987), in which the hierarchies of gender are organized in relation to a diversity of masculinities and femininities linked to racial, cultural and social class differences (Oliart 1991), as well as practices and sexual identities. As we have seen, the sexual practices and sexual initiative of the young women are fundamental to classifications and hierarchies among them. Here I will show that race, rural cultural attributes (which become discrediting or stigmatizing marks linked to indigenous cultures), geographic background, and economic position and social class, re-signify the behaviors themselves and position the young women in moral and social hierarchies. On their side, the heterosexual young men are judged according to a different

[37] "Gender regimes" are patterns of gender arrangements, including structures, thoughts and politics about gender relations in a given institution or where "gender orders" operate (Connell 1987).

standard than that used with the women, and they are in a privileged position with respect to the young women and the non-heterosexual men: they can experience their sexuality without being restricted or losing value or prestige because of it. On the contrary, they can gain prestige among their male peers precisely because of taking sexual initiative. These young men see their possibilities for attracting and winning the heart of the girls (and being accepted as a potential partner) as being increased or decreased according to their position in the structures of social class or the hierarchies associated to race and culture. This, at the same time, gives them more or less prestige in relation to their male peers, who try to push or encourage each other to approach the girls.

The intersection of social inequities and hierarchies produces discrimination and exclusion of youth in their quotidian interactions, excluding them from social relations.[38] This form of exclusion corresponds to what Kabeer (2000), drawing on the work of Fraser (1997), calls "cultural forms of injustice or disadvantage"—different from the primarily economic forms of injustice or disadvantage—"which are manifested in the ways in which the dominant social groups invisibilize, seek to impose dominant values, or routinely devalue and disparage certain categories of people" (Kabeer 2000: 86). Here I will illustrate particular mechanisms by which these cultural forms of injustice (e.g., exclusion of indigenous girls and "homosexual" boys) are interconnected with other forms of social division and prestige.

[38] Following De Haan and Maxwell (1998:3), exclusions related to ethnicity and sexual identity correspond to exclusion from social relations, one of three main areas of deprivation, when the other two are exclusion from resources (e.g., poverty and gender-based discrimination regarding employment opportunities) and exclusion from legal rights (e.g., age-based discrimination regarding autonomy of youth to make decisions about sexual partners and use of sexual health services).

The concepts of stigma and symbolic violence bring together difference, culture and power. As such they are useful for understanding the ways in which the forms of social exclusion referred to here are produced and persist in urban Ayacucho, in spite of the new discourses about rights and equity that my informants learned. According to Goffman, stigma is "an attribute that is significantly discrediting, which in the eyes of society, serves to reduce the person who possesses it" (Goffman 1963:13). This influential author also asserts that stigma can be seen as a relationship between an "attribute and a stereotype," thus stigma is a "mark" or attribute that links a person to undesirable characteristics or stereotypes created in society. This social character of stigma, and its relation with social discrimination and power inequality, is included in the conceptualization of stigma of Link and Phelan (2001): "stigma exists when elements of labeling, stereotyping, separating, status loss, and discrimination co-occur in a power situation that allows these processes to unfold" (p. 382). Complex cultural and social mechanisms disvalue Quechua and rural traits and non-heterosexual masculine identities among youth in the city of Ayacucho. These cultural traits and identities are associated with forms of deprivation and inferiority that stem from inequality and hierarchy. For instance, underlying the cultural exclusion of rural people of Quechua background are multiple forms of exclusion they face, such as economic deprivation, ethnic discrimination, and political marginalization.

Parker and Aggleton (2003) offer significant contributions about conceptual frameworks to address HIV and AIDS-related stigma and stigmatization that I will use for my analysis. These authors move beyond a focus mainly centered on individuals, to conceptualize stigma and stigmatization in relation to the reproduction of social difference. Within this

framework, the construction of stigma "involves the marking of significant differences between categories of people, and through such marking, their insertion in systems or structures of power" (Parker and Aggleton 2003: 17). In order to understand stigma and discrimination, these authors propose to study the links between stigma, political economy and social exclusion. Likewise, they focus on the intersections among culture, power and difference, and use the notion of symbolic violence to address these connections. Bourdieu defines "symbolic violence" as a "gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims" (Bourdieu 2001: 1-2). This violence is exercised through symbolic systems (including words, images and practices), upon a social agent with his or her complicity as "the dominated apply categories from the point of view of the dominant" (Bourdieu 2001: 35). Symbolic violence is often exercised together with various forms of violence, such as being treated as inferior, being denied resources or excluded from social networks or certain spaces, which favor misrecognition of symbolic violence (Bourdieu 2001). These interlinked connections between stigma and social exclusion, and the intersections among difference, culture and power, are particularly evident in processes of stigmatization and discrimination of rural marks and "homosexual" male identities or behaviors among Ayacuchano youth, as I will show in the following paragraphs.

Cultural Racism

Among some of the indigenous cultural marks that are stigmatized by youth (and adults) are the "*motocidad*" or the accent to speak Spanish interfered by traces of Quechua, the last name, indigenous clothing style and other external signs of lower status and social class, such

as the lack of possession of accessories and goods qualified as modern (e.g., a cell phone). At the same time, youth know that it is not well seen to discriminate because of racial or ethnic reasons, and they avoided revealing discriminatory opinions in front of me.

As several authors have argued (see De la Cadena 2004; Oliart 2010; Weismantel 2001; Wilson 2000), racial hierarchies form a social structure and in important ways organize the social relations and the imaginary in Andean societies. However, the way in which these are expressed is varied and changing, with a language that the North American anthropologist Mary Weismantel describes as "volatile" and "hyperactive" (Weismantel 2001: xxxviii).

In Peru, since the colonial period (Macera 1977) there has been extensive racial and cultural *mestizaje* (mixture). Prejudice and discrimination against Indians, *cholos*, and blacks have not been sanctioned by the law, and involve a complex combination of racial, economic, social, and cultural criteria (De la Cadena 2004; Oliart 2010). The anthropologist Marisol de la Cadena (2004) says that in Peru a "silent racism" has been created, a sort of "racism without races" established in a cultural definition of race that is different than a biological notion of the term, which is also a social construction as well as the concept of race itself. This cultural racism has given origin to a hierarchy that combines culture with socioeconomic status, and on which the indigenous culture of the poor peasant population is located at the inferior end of the hierarchy and the Western culture of the rich social classes on the opposite superior end. Even though the color of the skin and the features associated with Andean or black backgrounds may be used to categorize and discriminate against certain people, this categorization is not permanent, because the persons can change their position in this hierarchy when they acquire high educational levels or better socioeconomic situations. One

example of this fluidity and mobility are the *mestizos indigenas* studied by De la Cadena (2004) in Cuzco. These persons are those who can become *mestizos* and at the same time continue to be Indians: they left the stigma of *indianidad* (De la Cadena 2004), the poverty and exclusion of rural peasant population, when they get a higher education or a better economic situation; however they speak the Quechua language and maintain a range of indigenous cultural and artistic practices. In this case, the meaning of the ethnic and racial categories is related to changes generated by a process of upward social mobility (De la Cadena 2004).

With regard to the ways in which racial discrimination is expressed currently in Ayacucho, the Peruvian sociologist Patricia Oliart (2010), found in her study with students from the public university of Ayacucho (the Universidad Nacional San Cristobal de Huamanga) that racial classifications were replaced with the geographic ones, maintaining the association of rural with indigenous, and of urban with white and *mestiz*o. These young people escape from the racial duality by means of geographic classifications associated to corporal attributes, establishing a difference between city dwellers, urbanized or integrated, and people from rural areas. Among the territorial and cultural marks that are kept in mind to make these distinctions are the perfect command of Spanish, the kind of clothing that is worn, and the body language used. The existence of a blurred racism may be explained by a series of transformations in Peruvian society[39] that made racial discrimination politically incorrect (Oliart 2010:204).

[39] See De la Cadena 2005.

Thus, although cultural racism is exclusionary and persists in Peru, it is not an intractable inequality. Some people who suffered discrimination found ways to escape from the lowest social positions in ethnic hierarchies. They achieved this through various means, including educational mobility and the abandonment or transformation of indigenous cultural characteristics (see: De la Cadena 2004). This does not mean that these people no longer suffer discrimination in any circumstances. Rather, they suffer less discrimination than before or they experienced a certain social mobility (economic, educational or occupational mobility) that increased their social prestige, access to material resources, and their acceptance by different social groups (see: De la Cadena 2004). My young informants in urban Ayacucho had similar experiences. In the following lines I will illustrate two ways in which sexuality and social relations are related to racial hierarchies, both historically and in current meanings and experiences of youth.

The Sexualization of Race

As it has been shown by different authors in Latin America (e.g., Diaz 2006; Urrea et al. 2008) and other parts of the world (e.g., Fanon 1986; Stepan 1990), in Ayacucho there is a sexualization of the race, which naturalizes discredited forms of sexual agency, sexual identity, or sexual behaviors within subaltern and discriminated ethnic groups. During my fieldwork I observed a number of examples of this connections between social hierarchies of race and sexuality, such as expressions written on the walls inside the toilets of schools and in the university, and I also heard insults in conflictive situations where racial stereotypes were associated with stigmatized sexual behaviors: for example, expressions such as "*chola regalona*" (loose *chola*), "*negra puta, compórtate*" ("behave yourself, you black whore"), or

"*negro maricón*" ("black queer") or "*cholo cabro*" ("*cholo* poof"). In Perú, the categories *cholo and negro* (black), associated with a range of behaviors and sexual identities that are socially questioned or stigmatized, are considered to fall at the low end of the racial hierarchy.

One day, in a bar, I overheard a conversation between a group of drunk boys. It seemed that one of the boys broke up with his girlfriend and his friends were trying to console him. One of them told him: "Brother, it's better that you broke up now. There are other girls who are better. You need a girl who is a "chica de su casa" [a "good girl", literally a girl who stays at home]. To be honest, she was too *chola* for you and, like any good *chola*, she is a little loose. She already has another boyfriend. Better sooner than later."

The use of the term *cholo* or *chola* was expanded in Peru at the beginning of the 20th century to talk of "hybrid" identities that escape of the division between Indians and mestizos (Quijano 2000; Oliart 2010). In a similar way, the youth in this study use the term *chol*o to call those who come from rural areas or have rural cultural attributes but now live in the city of Huamanga. *Chola*, the feminine noun, is used sometimes with a sexual connotation, in different way than *cholo*, the masculine noun. As Weismantel (2001) states, the *chola* in Andean societies expresses racial and gender transgressions. This is linked to her participation in the public spaces and especially in the markets, which gives them more freedom of movement and access to their own income, which in Huamanga city has as an antecedent the "*vivanderas"* (street sellers) whose existence has been documented since the 18th and 19th centuries (Urrutia 1982; Gonzales 1999). However, the presence of *cholas* in public spaces does not reduce the racial and gender conflicts, but rather makes them more evident. Social rejection of these women's transgression of social, ethnic, and gender frontiers is expressed in

the assignment of stereotypes of gender that hypersexualize the *cholas* or marginalize them morally as inferior (Weismantel 2001). As the historian Natalia Gonzales (1999) documented, the negative stereotypes about the *vivanderas* in Huamanga that characterize them as scandalous, conflictive and dirty come from the 19th century and continue to hold sway until today. She suggests that these stereotypes serve as social sanctions, and that one of their functions is social control because different historical documents have alluded to the danger that these women represented as negative examples for other women (Gonzales 1999: 267).

"That Person is not for You": Exclusion and Racial Hierarchies

The valuation of the young women as potential partners in a relationship is not only related to their agency or sexual behavior, even when those are aspects considered to be of great importance by both girls and boys. The expression "that person is not for you" summarizes in some way the criteria of social exclusion based on racial and cultural hierarchies (related to class hierarchies and social status) which intervene in the selection of a partner and in the opinion of the group of peers about this. In this case, the focus is about criteria of social valuation and social stratification that are applied to both women and men, in the market of potential relationship partners. Girls and boys consider especially attractive persons of fair complexion and light-colored eyes, features which are common to those people who come from Cangallo, a region of Ayacucho, who they call "*gringos*" (slang for North American used by extension to people light-skined and colored eyes). Besides the physical aspect, that is made relative, the geographic place of origin and the cultural markers of ethnicity are also considered relevant.

The foreign girls and boys, who come from Lima, or any other city of the coast, the jungle, or from another country, are especially attractive as possible partners for several reasons. In first place, even if local beauty is recognized (having as main reference the "*gringos*" from Cangallo, a province in Ayacucho), they hold foreigners (not Andean people) in high esteem because they are considered "prettier." When asked why, the answers given were associated with the color of the skin and the Western physical features, images which dominate TV advertising and programs, big company catalogs, and advertising leaflets. Some of these answers include the following: "because [he] is whiter;" "his face is more delicate, he looks as a model of Lima Limón" (a Peruvian TV program); "they are thinner women"; "doesn't look like a *huaco-retrato*" (Pre-Inca pottery representing a human face where Andean features are reproduced and accentuated in detail). Foreigners are considered to have greater (or distinct) cultural capital and to be able to teach local people (from Ayacucho) different things (including foreign customs and languages; information about job and academic opportunities abroad) coming from their place of origin.

Some girls said that probably the foreign boys were less sexist or chauvinist than the locals. An additional attraction is the thought that the foreigners could have more economic resources, because Ayacucho and other places of the Sierra (the Andes) are poorer than the rest of the country and other countries. Also, they think that these foreigners can facilitate travel out of Ayacucho to study or to work. Contrary to this, people who are not attractive as potential partners are those persons from rural areas who show cultural marks that put them closer to the indigenous world, culturally discriminated and poor economically. Racial and ethnic discrimination are related to cultural prejudices, social disadvantages and economic

poverty as a result of long-term inequalities within the Peruvian society, where Andean rural areas are the least benefited by the political economic policies of successive neoliberal governments (Degregori, 1988, 2007).

Nidia, a 18 year-old informant, told me that she started to like a young man who attends in a store but she finally desisted because she realized that her friends were right that he is not for her, he is "*poca cosa*" for her (not what she deserves). When I tried to understand what *"poca cosa"* really means to her friends, she felt a little embarrassed and could not explain what it means. When I met the boy interested in Nidia, her friends made jokes about his clothes, hair and way of speaking. He was too rural for Nidia, "he seems like he is "*recien bajado"* (recently coming from the highlands)", as one of the girls said. Some rural marks are attributed by youth following stereotypes about rural people's characteristics and their customs, which are considered uncivilized or backward. These people are thought to have a peculiar smell and aesthetic preferences, and their manners are qualified as ugly or inferior. One example is depicted in the dissertation of the Ayacuchan anthropologist Joseph Silva (2008). He interviewed a young woman in the city of Ayacucho who stated that she had the feeling of having been discriminated against when she heard a boy, who apparently was a candidate to be her boyfriend, telling somebody else that he would have been embarrassed to be with a girl who came from the highlands from Ayacucho, which is mainly rural and indigenous: "I heard him to say 'how can I be with that smelly "*chusca*" (mongrel) from the Puna, what a shame to be with a smelly girl, how do you think" (Silva, 2008: 151). Other examples of this kind of exclusion are depicted in the dissertation of the Ayacuchan anthropologist Galia Garcia (2001). In his research with students of Mariscal Caceres School,

Garcia gets testimonies from boys who expressed having been rejected by girls or excluded from their group of friends for being *cholos or having friends who are cholos* (Garcia, 2001:71).

Most of the rural marks are not permanent or unchanging, and hiding or transforming them is a way to attenuate some situations of exclusion in the city of Ayacucho. These changes are not often related with the questioning of social inequities or cultural representations related to stigmatization processes. The ways in which youth confronted stigmatization and discrimination are shaped by symbolic violence, by the ways in which those who are stigmatized and discriminated against accept or internalize the stigma and discrimination that they are subjected to, and often confront it by hiding or erasing their cultural differences and adopting hegemonic or more valuable traits in the racial and cultural hierarchy. The interviewees who were born in rural zones made a major effort to "eliminate" the cultural markers of being born out of the city. They diminished or eliminated the "*motosidad*" (the particular accent a Quechua speaking person has when he or she speaks Spanish) after a lot of practice and stop speaking Quechua unless in strictly necessary situations in which they can use it as an advantage (in order to not let others understand what they are saying, or make fun of those who discriminate against them). This is the case of Lily, a 15 year-old girl who at age 13 came to the city of Ayacucho from a rural area. The testimony of Lily is an eloquent expression of rural girls' suffering and of attempts to overcome racial and cultural discrimination in the city of Ayacucho:

> Carmencita, you do not know what I was like before, when I first came from my village. My face was very red because my skin was burned by the intense cold of the countryside. My clothes were old and very simple, not like they are now. I did not speak Spanish well. I was so ashamed of it that I avoided talking to other girls and

> boys. After practicing and practicing, I was able to overcome "*el mote"* (Spanish with a Quechua accent). My neighbor helped me; she is a good person. She told me: "Come here, watch TV in my house and listen to these girls on TV… Watch these ladies and try to imitate how they speak." My neighbor also helped me enroll in school because my father did not know how to… At first, I suffered a lot in school because I couldn't understand the teacher very well. He spoke in Spanish all the time. But the worst part was that my schoolmates made me cry many times. They made fun of my face and my *mote*. None of the girls who are my friends now wanted to spend time with me back then. The most embarrassing situation was when I got head lice in my neighborhood. The girls told me: "Lousy! Country girls are lousy, dirty girls!" And I heard the teacher telling another teacher: "It is because their mothers are ignorant. They aren't accustomed to bathing or washing their hair often because on the farms they have no running water in their homes." But that's a lie! I got lice from other children in my neighborhood here in Ayacucho, not when I was in my village. I did not go to school because I was so ashamed. My aunt suggested my mother cut my hair and buy a shampoo with insecticide and that's how I got rid of the lice.
>
> After my neighbor got me a job in a house [as domestic worker] and I was able to buy some new clothes. I bought this T-shirt and these jeans. At least then I looked more decent. I'm more presentable and have more friends now.

It is clear to the young women that they need to avoid showing rural indigenous cultural markers (such as "*motosear*" – which refers to speaking Spanish mixed with Quechua- or wearing a typical Andean hair style and clothes). They have learnt that if youth do not change or hide these cultural markers, they can be marginalized and discriminated by their peers, potential partners, and employers. As Dulia, a 17-year-old girl, told me, while girls show rural cultural attributes, they are excluded from some jobs in the commerce sector or the state offices, and they are relegated to domestic jobs ("*empleada de casa*") or to selling food in the market where adult women from rural areas (called *mamachas*) usually work. At the same time the young girls value the many manifestations of the Andean culture, such as the Quechua language or the dances and indigenous costumes, but only when these are presented mostly in special and private situations.

The fact that youth suffer symbolic violence and acknowledge the stigmatization of their indigenous traits does not mean that they do not value their culture and cultivate its manifestations in friendly environments. For some of the girls and boys, hiding indigenous traits was a conscious strategy to survive in the city and not an expression of shame for their culture. Furthermore, some of them are critical of the imposition of certain cultural values and the discrimination against indigenous culture, but only express it in private because they do not want to be stigmatized. The first time I asked the boys and girls who could help me translate some questions in Quechua, none of them admitted that they spoke Quechua in addition to Spanish. Many of them also maintained that I would not need to translate any words to Quechua because "all the boys and girls here speak Spanish." Some of the youth told me that they know a little Quechua because their grandmothers speak it but that they didn't know enough to teach me. Afterwards, I learned from the NGO workers and some young advocates that several of these youth speak Quechua very well but only at home. Lily, a 17 year-old advocate, explained to me:

> Nobody wanted to tell you that they know Quechua because other boys and girls might make fun of them if they speak it. Quechua is beautiful. I like to sing in Quechua but only do it in my house or at patron saint festivals because many people in this city are ignorant about the value of our ancestry. They might think I am backwards because I came from the countryside. People in the city usually do not speak Quechua and the youth who were born in the city don't really learn Quechua, they just know a little.

Girls who were born in the city of Ayacucho (to migrant parents or grandparents) had not suffered the same humiliations that Lucía has as a rural migrant from a Quechua village. But they did feel the need to conceal their indigenous traits by changing their appearance and looking more "decent," "attractive" or "beautiful." The notion of beauty has a clear racial

connotation because it is associated with fair complexion and light-colored eyes, far from the Andean features and rural appearance (with the exception of Cangallo and other provinces in Ayacucho). Boys and girls with indigenous backgrounds tried to "improve" their personal appearance by emphasizing characteristics associated with young *mestizo* or white urban residents. They adopted a modern look, transforming their physical self with a new hairstyle,[40] clothing, or with the use of accessories such as glasses, caps, and other prestigious consumer goods.

Youth worked hard to buy these fashionable garments, but they were not always successful. As Luz said, "if before they [some girls at her school] didn't look at me or didn't talk to me, now at least, they invite me to their parties or to go out, but I feel embarrassed because I don't even have anything appropriate to wear." Similar processes of erasing rural Andean markers among students in Ayacucho are documented by the Peruvian sociologist, Patricia Oliart (2010), and the linguist, Virginia Zavala, and teacher, Gavina Córdova (Zavala and Córdova 2010).

However, there are indigenous markers that are more difficult to erase or disguise and are stigmatizing in urban settings. One of the relevant ethnic markers that is most difficult to hide or transform is the last name. For example, last names of Quechua origin, such as Quispe, Cutipa, Huaytalla, among others, are considered to have low prestige, and in colloquial and intimate conversations between peers, it is common to hear that they avoid forming couples or even marrying someone who has such a last name. This preference may be accentuated if one has a Quechua last name because what is sought is to improve and ascend

[40] Among rural *Ayacuchanos* the most common type of hair is plain and lightly curly hair. A lightly curly hair is more appreciated than a plain hair, but plain become also appreciated when it is transformed through a modern cut and style.

in social status with a more prestigious last name. The first time I heard of this was one day at a birthday party, talking with my friend from Ayacucho, who told me after some drinks, “who was going to say that I would marry a Quispe,” since the family of my husband has this last name, and his father is from Ayacucho. My friend is a nurse, around 40 years old, and her last name is Palomino Huaytalla. The first last name is considered “passable” and the second is also from Quechua origin but less common than Quispe. She told me that, regarding the last names, the idea is to get a “better” last name and not a “worse” one.

I later had the same conversation with a midwife and an NGO practitioner, who is nearly 30 years old, who works with the teenagers in urban Ayacucho. In confidence, she told me one day, coming back together by moto-taxi and talking about our husbands, that in the time when she was studying at the university, a repeated comment amongst the students was that “I never would marry a Quispe.” The reason is that she and her friends did not want to acquire a surname considered an emblematic Andean marker and a “very common” last name, highly typical in Ayacucho and other departments in the Peruvian Andes. Avoiding being related to indigenous last names, such as Quispe, is a way of avoiding an ethnic mark that would link these urban women with high level of education, to the poor Ayacuchanos and other Peruvians with low social and cultural status: the rural indigenous people. Because the last name is a stable mark, difficult to change, people want to get a “better” last name through getting married with someone without an indigenous surname.

The anthropologist Joseph Silva (2008) analyzed similar ideas about social discrimination in Ayacucho in his licentiate dissertation. Asking if they will marry a person with a last name of Andean origin, one of the young interviewees answered, “no,” because

she wanted her children to have "a passable last name," even a common one but with a Spanish origin, "such as Palomino, Gonzáles, Gómez" (Silva, 2008: 171). Last names of Quechua origin, such as Huaccaychuco, Perccalloca, Huallpa or Cutipa were considered aesthetically ugly: "they don't sound nice," "it doesn't rhyme" (Silva 2008: 171). The low prestige of the last names from Quechua origin is associated directly with the lower social status of the rural in relation to the urban, and it is common to say that they are "last names from the small farm" (Silva, 2008:169). As I have already mentioned, there is a clear association between rural areas and indigenous ethnicity and between urban areas and white or *mestizo* ethnic backgrounds.

Among my informants, both boys or girls with a Quechua surname or other rural marks (e.g., dress, speaking Spanish with interference of Quechua), have experienced subtle or overt forms of discrimination from their peers, who for instance, did not treasure them as potential partner, or excluded them from certain social networks or meetings due to their cultural marks. According to my informants, discrimination based on the last name is attenuated in specific situations, particularly if girls or boys are "very much in love." As Oliart (2010) notices, the social forms of classification can be more rigid than the way in which concrete persons cross the social boundaries.

Geographic Place of Origin and "Spatial Stigma"

Similar to what happens with the ethnic and racial differences, feminine sexual agency and behavior are associated with the place of origin. Sometimes there is a naturalization of some characteristics (for example, being seen as "hot" because of coming from the jungle, or being

dirty because of coming from rural areas in the Andes), and at other times there is a generalization of attitudes related with cultural and economic contexts of particular places or regions. In a sense, it is "spatial stigma" or "territorial stigma," terms coined by Wacquant (2008) to name a vilification of high-poverty urban areas; a blemish of place of residence, that, following Goffman (1963), can "disqualify the individual" and deprive him or her from "full acceptance by others" (Wacquant 2008: 238). Spatial stigmatization triggers prejudice and discrimination among outsiders such as employers and public bureaucracies, and undermines the capacity for collective identification and local solidarities of lower-class families (Wacquant 2008: 271).

In Ayacucho and other Peruvian areas, the place of origin is a source of stigma since it is related to a series of personal characteristics and values disqualifying individuals as potential partners or friends (Ames 2011). Unlike the spatial stigma associated to poverty and marginalization, which can be dissimulated, attenuated or even annulled, "through geographic mobility and minimal cultural disguising" (Wacquant 2008: 238), spatial stigma associated with indigenous cultural background in Ayacucho is a stigmatizing mark that can be difficult to hide or change after geographic mobility or migration, as we will see after in this chapter.

Girls and boys alluded to a greater sexual initiative of girls who come from the VRAE zone ("the jungle"), where the main economic activity is drug trafficking. It is generally assumed that these girls are "players" or "loose women." These girls are considered to be more "hot" (having more sexual desire and attractiveness) because of the influence of the hot weather and a more permissive social environment in the jungle than in the Andean areas of Ayacucho. Another stereotype is that girls from "the jungle" are accustomed to getting money

easily, and also to getting goods and invitations from boys because they have grown up in a zone of drug trafficking. This idea is related to the greater opportunities of girls to get money in the VRAE zone than in Ayacucho, which may imply sex work, activities related to coca and cocaine production, and receiving cash gifts.

Similar ideas are expressed in the dissertation of Joseph Silva (2008), where a young woman who was interviewed said that the girls who came from the VRAE zone to study at the capital cities are mostly "players" and try to get the boyfriends of others who are quieter – and on many occasions they succeeded (p. 90). The same girl said that she could attest to this based on personal experience because it has happened to her and other friends (Ibid, p. 90). Here, it is interesting to note the comparison the informant made between "the quieter girls" and other types of girls, who represent a sort of menace, including the girl interviewed herself, whose boyfriend abandoned her because he fell in love with a girl from the VRAE. It is been assumed that the girls from the jungle are more likely to be "players," even if they are not the only ones, but it is a characteristic that sets them apart from the rest of the girls in Huamanga.

Some young men interviewed suggested fear of having girls from the jungle as "serious" girlfriends, and some of the girls expressed distrust of having them as friends because these girls can conquer or flirt with their boyfriends or suitors. From their side, one of the girls interviewed by Silva who came from Huanta, a district on the border of the jungle of Ayacucho, indicated that she is conscious that the girls from her land are classified as "hot and easy," but this generalization is not fair: "don't put us all in one sack" (p.143). In my research there were no boys born in the VRAE, but many of them have been there temporally or were acquainted with persons from that zone of Ayacucho, and they made similar

references to those described above. At the same time, boys confessed that they felt a special attraction to the girls from the jungle. But they didn't necessarily feel a greater social valuation because of it because these girls have the reputation of being fond of the easy life (meaning that these girls are accustomed to receiving gifts and other economic benefits from their partners). As a result, the boys are wary about establishing relationships with girls from the jungle. However, contrary to the cultural constructions their peers uphold, some boys, like Cesar, have had a different experience with girls from the jungle. César and the other boys did not reformulate stereotypes about girls from the jungle or social hierarchies based on girls' gender and forms of sexual agency, but relativized them and learned that "not all these girls are like that," that "there are exceptions" or that they could change, according to their particular experiences with these girls. César recounted:

> César: I really liked this girl [from the VRAE zone] but I always remembered my friends' warnings. They used to say: "Be careful, because the girls from the jungle can cheat on you easily". When they knew about Charo, they told me: "you can be with her just for a while. If you fall in love, you will suffer." They were wrong. We are still happy together. I think there are exceptions everywhere, no?
>
> Carmen: And how did you deal with what your friends told you?
>
> César: I saw that the girl did her best to be *tranquila* [a good girl, literally meaning: a calm girl] and she behaved like a *chica de su casa* [a good girl, who does not go out much and stay at home]. I saw that she was very affectionate but only with me. All the times I stopped by her house she was there. Most of the times she went out it was with me. There are many things that made her trustworthy. When we went to a disco, she was not as scandalously dressed as other girls. Maybe she is different than what people say about girls from the jungle or maybe she changed because of me.

Katherina, a friend of the girlfriend of César (Kiara), explained to me that they learnt to behave different in Ayacucho than they do in the jungle so as to avoid being stigmatized as

"loose girls," although they felt very constrained acting according to what is expected of a "decent girl":

> Katherina: I cannot get used to being in my house so much of the time. I get bored. In the jungle it is different, but Kiara and I have had to control ourselves and pretend that we are calm girls, ha, ha, ha. . No, I am just joking—we are good girls! But the boys here think that all of us, because we come from the jungle, are loose girls. At the beginning they invited us to go out just to have sex because they thought that we were loose and very hot. I t was annoying!
> Carmen: But, is it because you are from the jungle or they have these ideas regarding how do you say… about girls who are not quiet?
> Katherina: No… I think it is especially the case with us. Maybe it happens with other girls from here but because they give boys real reasons to think that way about them. Maybe if we were not from the jungle, we could wear sexier clothes and be more cheerful without any consequences. But if we do that, the boys from here will never take us seriously [meaning that boys will never consider them as stable girlfriends or fiancées].

This also produced a contrary effect, when a stigmatized sexual behavior is resignified in women whose geographic origin, associated with a major cultural and economic capital, gives them greater value and prestige. This is similar to the phenomenon of "whitening" of the Indians or the *cholos* due to the social class, or the acquisition of cultural and economic capital. The girls who come from Lima or from abroad are considered more sexually "liberal" or "libertine" than the girls from Ayacucho, which the young people believe is because they have a "different culture," or a "different education," which some describe as more "modern" and "advanced." This difference is also attributed to the absence of a moral or religious control that would operate more strongly among those who were brought up in Huamanga. In this case, it is possible to perceive a clear tension between having a high social valuation and attraction, but, at the same time, having some suspicion and caution. The higher valuation of

the foreign girls from Lima and from abroad is connected with their greater access to the "modern," to economic prosperity and the goods that it can buy.

Homosexual Men, Stigmatization and Discrimination among Boys

Most of the boys interviewed naturalized a series of negative attributes assigned to "homosexual" boys and in this way, stigmatized their sexual orientation, identity or behavior. They also fear that having a close relationship (e.g., as friends or acquaintances) with non-heterosexual men could be a menace to their masculinity. In this way, these boys described "homosexual men" as if they were a subordinated racial group, as has also been shown by Stolcke (1992) and Viveros (2008) in their analyses about similarities between sexism and racism.

Symbolic violence against "homosexuals" and exclusion of them from boys' social relations are interlinked in their processes of masculinity-identity construction and social affirmation among their male peers. In Peru (Cáceres et al. 2002; Fuller 1996, 1997, 2001; Vásquez 2012) and in other countries of Latin America (Gutmann 1996; Lancaster 1995, 2002; Valdés and Olavarría 1997), heterosexuality is at the center of hegemonic masculinity,[41] and it should be demonstrated in behavior and attitudes. As other authors (Lancaster 1995; Connell 2005 [1995]) have also highlighted, masculinity is relational and a mean of structuring power not only in the relations between women and men, but also in the

[41] Sociologist R.W. Connell defines hegemonic masculinity as the historical configuration of gender practice that embodies one form of masculinity which is culturally exalted and supported by institutional power (Connell 2005 [1995]).

relations between and among men.[42] Demonstration of heterosexuality, stigmatization of homosexual men and avoiding them as friends are means of facing homosexual stigma and reassert power and prestige in heteronormative gender and sexual hierarchies among youth in urban Ayacucho and elsewhere.

Borrowing Erving Goffman's words, Roger Lancaster (1995) proposes that the circulation of homosexual stigma threatening men in Nicaragua requires of them a carefully-staged "presentation of the self in everyday life" (Goffman 1959), which involves transactions at different levels of the life of men, including private and public exchanges. Lancaster's idea of "passing along" homosexual stigma as a "sticky" one (1995: 151) is very useful to understand discourses and attitudes regarding gay men among boys in Ayacucho city. An important difference between boys and girls is that the boys described gays or male homosexuals as having a constant sexual desire that made them "promiscuous" and a menace or threat for sexual harassment. Lenin, an informant who was 17 years old, expressed this idea with these words: "there is a fear that they want to get involved with one, that they may want sex." For that reason, although most youth say they respect gays, they really prefer not having them as friends or to establishing close relations with them. Boys justified this attitude because they were subject to sexual harassment or flirting. However, they mostly referenced experiences that other people had told them about. In some cases, this seemed to be because they were embarrassed to acknowledge that they had these experiences. In other cases, it seemed that boys needed a justification to appear politically correct in their roles as advocates

[42] Sociologist Michael Kimmel argues for powerful links between homosociality—same-sex-focused social relations- and masculinity, since the performance of manhood is in front of, and granted by, other men. Men seek to improve their position in masculine social hierarchies, using such "markers of manhood" such as occupational achievement, wealth, power and status, physical prowess, and sexual success with women (Kimmel 1994: 128-129).

in sexual health and rights. For instance, Julio said: “it is not that I discriminate against homosexual boys, but I have to protect myself”.

Two of my male informants told me about their experiences with boys who proposed to have sex with them —something that was recounted to me with much embarrassment—, asking me not to comment about it with their friends. To these boys it is not only an “excess” in the desires and sexual initiative of “the homosexuals,” but it is to enter a field of contamination that may place doubt on their own masculinity. Some boys added that they even preferred not to walk with them in the street because of the risk of being confused, mixed up, or put in embarrassing situations because “they are scandalous in the street” (Richard, 17 years old). This fear of being confused with or mistaken for gays in public contrasts with the games and jokes among boys in private spaces, where they joke pretending to be a couple,[43] and some of them show physical closeness among men pretending to have an erotic situation. This was registered in some pictures of extremely restricted circulation between the boys who attended a meeting of youth health promoters where they shared rooms. The existence of these pictures was known about by the girls because the boy who took the photos was the cousin of one of the girls, and she founded them by chance. This contrast between private homoerotic game in only-boys meetings, and public stigmatization and discrimination of gay men, would be part of the homosocial organization of closeness among self-identified heterosexual boys in Ayacucho, including affective, sexual or other

[43] The same games were observed in the research carried out by the sociologist Patricia Oliart with young men in the Teacher School of the public university of Ayacucho (2010).

kind of social bonds.[44] Thus, what seems to be a contradiction is a way by which boys negotiate with homophobic gender rules to experience closeness with other boys and do not lose prestige as "real" men. Manuel´s reflections about the social consequences of physical contact between men illustrate the significance for boys of avoiding any public display that may be interpreted as "suspicious" regarding their heterosexuality:

> Here it is not common that men hold hands in public, or touch each others' faces even if there is no sexual intention behind it. It is not like it is with girls. Girls do those things and still nobody doubts that they are only friends and there is no sexual relationship between them. Not even your father kisses you much when you are young. It is almost impossible for you to kiss or touch a friend and have that be seen as normal. No, no, no… After that, people could suspect that you are a *cabrito* [derogatory word to say homosexual boy, meaning literally: young goat]. And no boy wants to be taken for a homosexual. I am not. I am an open-minded boy but do not want any girls to doubt that I like girls not boys.

In contrast to what happens among the boys, the girls do not think that persons who like others of their same sex, be they men or women, have a greater sexual desire or initiative. Also, in contrast with the need of the boys to show how they differ from gays, when these boys are in public spaces, some of the girls "play" openly pretending to be lesbians, hugging each other and saying they love each other—simulating that they are a couple and claiming fidelity or showing jealousy among them. The need to keep a distance from gays, for the boys who are defined as heterosexual, could be related to a social construction of masculinity by denial of women and gay men, which is present in the gender norms of masculine socialization ("don't cry like a little woman," "don't be queer, fight"), and in unequal power structures of social recognition and privilege between heterosexual and gay youth in

[44] About the relations between homosociality and forms of negotiating masculinity among heterosexual men, see Kaplan (2005) and Kiesling (2002).

Ayacucho. The fear or concern of being threatened in their gender identity, would not happen among girls of urban Ayacucho who might have lesbian friends, because the notion of femininity among these girls is constructed in affirmative way (not by opposition to lesbians or heterosexual men), but by the presence of specific attributes (physical and cultural), such as the capacity to be a mother or being more delicate than men. Besides, even if almost all the interviewees had fears in specific situations, sometimes these are experiences that they have heard about from others, and they generalize from them.

As indicated by Taguieff (1990), the "others," (in this case, gay men), don't exist as individuals but only as a stigmatized group. It is about a process of construction of the alterity ("otherness") that is shaped by the mistrust of differences, which are constructed in a hierarchical relation according to a sexual moral system that considers heterosexuality and masculine initiative in romantic and sexual relations as their primary referent of "normality." In this case, stigmatization of gay men is produced in the social and cultural construction of masculinity and sexuality that tends to deny or undervalue femininity and non-heterosexual sexualities. These ideas about masculinity are often present in mass media, among most of the school-teachers, church priests and catechism instructors (*catequistas*), as well as parents and peers. At the same time, female youth advocates in sexual and reproductive health issues (trained by a feminist NGO), and a small group of teachers (more open to sexual right-discourses, some of them trained by the NGO) insist on respect to sexual diversity. This notion of sexual diversity has been incorporated, in some ways, in the discourse of several boys interviewed, but it is not still manifested in their relationships with non-heterosexual men. Intersecting inequalities and hierarchies require addressing them together. A change in

these boys' behaviors also would imply changes in masculinity construction and gender relationships among men.

Social Class and Economic Discrimination

Social class, understood not only regarding the control of the means of production, but in connection to the possession of economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), intersects with with ethnicity in shaping social and moral hierarchies in urban Ayacucho. "To have money" and access to a higher educational level provides a kind of "whitening," and thus facilitates a transformation of rural cultural marks—for instance a better fluency of Spanish, more access to fashionable clothing, and other signs of differentiation between the urban teenagers. Mariana, the 17-year-old daughter of a rural family that was displaced because of political violence, worked as a domestic worker and explained to me how different—as a "humble person"—her situation is as compared to wealthier girls in the group of youth advocates. To be "humble" or "wealthy" people are colloquial categories to classify the extremes of the social class division, which is interlinked with ethnic hierarchies, access to opportunities and social prestige in the experience of youth, as Mariana suggested:

> Mariana: Yes, I like this boy, but it is like he did not know that I existed because I am a humble person. You see… he is more interested in Meche or Gabriela. They are whiter, have pretty dresses, they are *bien arregladitas* [well presented] all the time, and they will study at the university soon…
> Carmen: How are you sure that he doesn't see you that way.
> Mariana: Ha, Ha, ha. Yes. You do not know because you are not from here.
> Carmen: What is a humble person?
> Mariana: It is when you are … poor, you cannot buy clothes, you dress badly, wearing the same jeans all the time…When your parents can't afford to pay for you to study in a regular program … When you have to take any job you can get. … Like me. I have to go to night school, after work. I started high school late. . At my age I should have graduated high school by now. But as you know, I am starting high school. It is

because I have to work all day. But it might change a little. I will work …. I am learning to make necklaces like the ones I offered you. My teacher told me I can make some money selling these necklaces and earrings downtown.
Carmen: That sounds like a good plan. I think your necklaces are very pretty. You told me that these girls or their families have more money than your family, but also you said that they "are whiter". What do you mean by that?
Mariana: How I can to say… You can be white because of the color of your skin, but people will discriminate against you because you look like "*gente del campo*" [people from the country] not like someone from the city, your clothes, the way you speak Spanish. Maybe Gabriela is a little less white than me but she looks prettier, more modern, less "serrana". She does not seem to be a humble person like girls from the country.

For women, ascending in the racial-cultural hierarchy in turn diminishes their association with an "excess" of sexual desire or sexual initiative, or a sexual behavior of lesser moral value. Having a higher social status makes girls less suspect of having a questionable past or current sexual behavior. Mariana illustrated to me what I learned from the narratives of teachers and other young people: moral categories are considered intrinsically related to the social position of youth in overlapping social divisions of class and ethnicity. The notion of "decent people" summarizes moral qualities assigned to people at the e top of social class and ethnic hierarchies. Being considered a decent person does not depend principally on boys' and girls' behavior, but on their social position in these social divisions. Boys and girls are humiliated and treated badly because of a supposedly disvalued moral "nature" and negative personality traits associated with their low socioeconomic position and indigenous and rural background. However, only in the case of girls, their moral values and behavior are related to a bad sexual reputation. The conversation with Mariana is clear about that:

Carmen: You said that Meche and Gabriela are treated like decent people because…

Mariana: Well, maybe I am a decent person also, but I am not seen that way; I am not treated like that by everyone. .
Carmen: When is a person seen as a decent one?
Mariana: You are seen as a decent person when you are well dressed, live in a decent house with the basic things you need to live well, electricity and water, you know… when you speak well, you study at the university. It is different then. Other people will not treat you as a humble person, as a "recién bajada" [person who recently came from the highlands], and they will not humiliate you.
Carmen: For instance, who has made you feel like a non decent person?
Mariana: For instance… my boss, she does not trust me, she thinks that I will steal things from her house because I am humble. She did not believe me the last time when I told her that her nephew bothers me all the time and that he tried to kiss me. People like her think that because you are humble you are "*ofrecida*" (a cheap girl). She said she was sure that I provoked him!! Her nephew also took advantage of me because I am humble. He is a "sinverguenza" [has no shame]… he said: "I am sure you want [to be kissed], all the cholas are like that, bitch" ….The word of a decent person is more respected, more valued. Everyone values what you say and who you are...

Gendered Economic Expectations: Who is a good partner?

To have more cultural and economic capital is an aspect that can be important to choosing a partner and forming a couple, at least in the case of girls. The boys get a bigger value as potential partners if they have more money in some circumstances. For instance, to mention different forms of partner relations, girls do not have the same expectation when it is a "real" boyfriend, who they like and love in an open relationship, as opposed to when a partner is accepted mainly as a circumstantial provider of some economic resources, gifts and invitations (called "*recurso*" or source of goods and money) in a hidden relationship.

A common joke among youth of both sexes is that an attractive boy has bulging trousers—this is sometimes with a double meaning, but the most common reference alludes to a bulky wallet full of money. At the same time the girls used to remark that this is meant only as a joke, indicating that not all the women are financially motivated, and that also there are other characteristics that make a boy attractive. To most of the girls interviewed, the most

important is the fidelity, by which they mean both being faithful (though not "*perros*" or "dogs") and having sincere feelings towards them. Also mentioned as important is physical appearance, with the most frequently mentioned definition being the ideal aesthetic referent (a "hunk"), typically along the lines of a white Western model, with light eyes, and with well-built muscles, although there are also other variants, such as *mestizo* boy with curly hair. Girls also talked about the importance of finding a "mature" boy, both with regard to his feelings as well as "aspirations to become a professional and better himself" and to have what we could call a "project" for his life in the future.

Some girls said that they "admit" to having sought out boys "with money" who could invite them out or give them presents. All related also that they know cases of classmates who consider that a wealthy man or a man who is already a professional is a "resource" or a way to help themselves while they are finishing their studies. These girls consider themselves active agents able to manage their charm and sexuality in order to obtain personal gains and achieve their plans. However, they prefer to hide it from view because they simultaneously have a boyfriend or because they know that will be criticized even by their female friends. Luz, who is a 19-year-old student of Technical Nursing in an institute, tells me the case of her classmate:

> One afternoon when I was coming back from my practice, I saw her leaving a shop with many things together with that older man, then the man hugged her and they were walking like that and she turn her head, but I pretended I was not looking, seeing nothing to avoid the embarrassing [situation], I walked as if I didn't see her. I passed by looking at cell phones, but she was there with a man, the same man from the photo. And another classmate has seen her also with that older man and… Isn't she with a boy? With an older sir like that, she said. Oh yes, I said. I have not seen any older man. I said that, to avoid any problem. And because she introduced us to another boyfriend, it means she is with that older man out of [financial] interest.

Among the boys and girls "with money" are the children of medium and large merchants from Ayacucho, owners of transport companies, or other prosperous businessmen. With greater or lesser quantity, these girls and boys have money in their wallets to spend on diversions and presents or to lend somebody. There are not many wealthy youth along these lines, but they have goods of very difficult access to most of the teenagers, such as sophisticated Blackberry smart phones, laptops, cars and motorcycles of recent models. The children of professionals with a stable job usually have more prestige than money, but are in better situation than the children of informal traders, factory workers and service workers, which is the case of the interviewees. Examples of these more highly valued professions include teachers, medical doctors, accountants, and other professionals who work for State institutions. Marylin provided a synthesis for me:

> If you are the daughter of a teacher or a [medical] doctor, at least they have a fixed income for you to study and to have clothes to change. Besides that, you are seen in all the good places – oh yes you are the daughter of the teacher, so it is like you are worth more. But in our case, my dad says, "I only have money for your transportation, if you want new clothes and anything else, you have to work." If I said my mom sells Quaker (oats) with milk at the market, nobody is going to give me importance (Marylin, 17 years old).

The interviewees recounted that they have had boyfriends, suitors and friends with more money than them, but who are not "the most wealthy of Ayacucho," and their contact with them has been mainly when they served them in a restaurant, café or some shop, or had seen them walking by the main square during some regional party or concert. Although there are a series of social spaces in which "the wealthy people" and the "humble" meet and interact, the young women of Ayacucho city do not gain access as equals to the same

everyday spaces of the boys from the more wealthy families who go to the more expensive private schools, and many of them study in universities in Lima.

The young men or adults that some young women perceive as a source of financial resources are usually older than they are, men who we could describe as being middle class that are business men, professionals or have finished a technical formation or education, and have a job that lets them spend money on presents and invitations as well as providing some economic help. They cannot offer them access to large recourses or luxury, but to some level of economic assistance. Rosa, an 18 year-old advocate, pointed out:

> Now, for example, we are going to finish our studies, and what we are going to do? Sometimes you are thinking, "I've been studying for nothing…" The easiest way to get help is to find somebody with a stable job and full stop: get help at least until you finish your [studies at the] Institute. I didn't do it, and I don't think to do it, but I have heard of these things.

The boys didn't ever say that they looked for a partner who has money or something similar. Between the more valued things in a girl are "to be pretty," "to have an attractive body," innocence, loyalty and the "culture" (meaning cultural background or education level) of the girls. There is not a joke similar to the "bulky trouser" (meaning with a full wallet) as in the case of boys to refer to girls with more economic capacity or resources than others. Only one boy, Elvis, told me about two young women, older than him, who lent money to him and bought expensive gifts for him, including a television and a leather jacket. Elvis highlighted that he is "open minded" and not a *machista* man, which is related to his gothic identity, and because of that he accepted women's gifts and money. However, he also insisted that these were exceptional situations which were not provoked by him: "if they want to give

something, I don't say no; it is the same when I have money and buy something beautiful or valuable for a girl." Elvis is an exceptional case.

In most of the romantic and sexual stories of both girls and boys, boys are expected to offer and pay for invitations, and girls to be invited by them; having money was a particular attraction of potential male partners for girls, but it was never mentioned among the most valuable quality of potential female partners for boys. This difference is explained as rooted in the role of the provider that is still strongly associated with men in cultural representations and gender expectations. Also, it has more to do with the "confession" that boys made about preferring to "teach" or "guide" the girl whom they establish a relationship with. A girl with more economic and educational resources or a higher social status may be far from the "type" of girl who can be easily "guided."

Social Inequity, Intersecting Hierarchies, and Sexual Agency

In this chapter, I aimed to analyze the ways in which social and moral hierarchies in the field of sexuality and gender interact with other social hierarchies and inequities, such as those related with ethnicity, geographical origin or location, and social class. The notion of intersectionality serves as a broad concept to refer the complex interactions among these forms of stratification and inequality in the experience of youth in urban Ayacucho. Likewise, I paid attention to the exclusionary character of social hierarchies and inequalities that come together in the experience of the same subjects or social groups with other forms of inequity (constituting double or triple discrimination). To address the exclusionary character of these specific racial, cultural or sexual differences, it was helpful to move beyond the general framework of intersectionality, and to include the framework of stigma and stigmatization

related to broader political economy and symbolic violence (Parker and Aggleton 2003) to understand some specific mechanisms of reproducing power and inequality.

This chapter shows that sexual agency is a significant area where social inequality and prestige are produced by the interaction of different forms of social division and upheld by cultural mechanisms and forms of power shaping stigma and discrimination. The meanings and consequences of exercising sexual agency, associated with the initiative to search for a partner or having sexual relations, reproduce gender and racial hierarchies and stigmatize the otherness of girls from "the jungle" black women, cholas, and male homosexuals. In all these cases, what is considered an excess of initiative is criticized. Nonetheless, the way in which the sexual or gender agency is experienced by heterosexual boys differs according to their position in the social, ethnic, and class hierarchies in the city of Ayacucho. It is not categorized in a specific way as excessive, as it is in the case of girls or gay boys. Thus, the interaction between gender and sexual representations and hierarchies, and other forms of social division (e.g., those based on ethnic or geographic provenance), uphold a double moral standard regarding sexual agency, granting greater sexual freedom to boys than to girls, and to heterosexual boys than to homosexual ones. In addition, the recognition of the moral value of the subjects vary according to their ethnicity and social class positions, which affects their possibilities for negotiation, the value given to their intentions and words, as well as the interpretation of their attitudes and behaviors in sexual matters.

Ideas related to a distorted or transgressive sexual agency serve as a language that produces social exclusion and upholds symbolic violence through stigmatization much like other forms of social discrimination, such as racism or homophobia. Paradoxically, it happens

in a context where racism, chauvinism and homophobia are criticized by youth advocates. For instance, boys do not appeal to the deviance of "homosexual" men, which contradicts the discourse about sexual diversity they learned in the NGO project, but to their "intimidating" or "menacing" sexuality. Having "too much sexual initiative" is treated as a disvalued trait in the case of girls or "homosexuals," as having "backward or uncivilized customs" in the case of girls and boys showing indigenous cultural traits. Girls showing what is seen as an excess of sexual agency, indigenous youth, and "homosexuals," are represented and treated as socially inferior (or deviant) groups in comparison with other groups who apparently do not have any social trait or particularity. Following Viveros (2008) and Stolcke (1992) in their analyses about similarities between sexism and racism, I can assert that there are significant analogies in the processes of symbolic violence that produce hierarchical differences through sexism, racism and homophobia operating in young people's everyday contexts in urban Ayacucho.

The forms of agency that these boys and girls use to deal with interdependent inequalities are complex. They could be misrecognized under a view of agency focused mainly on open resistance and rejection of structures of injustice and exclusion. Other chapters of this dissertation address various forms of youth agency, which show these complexities. This chapter, focused on interacting structures and ideologies of social inequity and prestige, contributes to a reflection on forms of agency used by youth to deal with social exclusion and stigmatization. Symbolic violence and social inequalities shape forms of youth agency by significantly limiting their choices. That youth hide their indigenous traits or that hypersexualized girls from the jungle have to behave according to the ideology of the "decent

girl," does not mean that they are passive bearers of racist and chauvinist ideologies. In their cultural context and within the social relationships of power in which they are enmeshed, these youth weighed their choices and did what seemed most beneficial to them in the face of exclusion and discrimination. Thus, they sought to increase their social and cultural assets by adopting a new cultural self-presentation or gender behavior. They do this precisely because youth who are discriminated against or stigmatized do not accept their position at the bottom of social hierarchies of race and gender, and not necessarily because they have interiorized ideologies that reproduce current social inequalities and hierarchies.

CHAPTER 7: VULNERABILITY SITUATIONS, YOUTH SEXUAL ABUSE AND RISKS

In this research I use the concept of social vulnerability as an analytical tool to address relationships between social disadvantages - such as social discrimination, inequality and poverty- and the greater fragility or exposure of individuals or groups to suffer particular risks and damages. The notion of social vulnerability is dynamic and relative, particularly, because the fragility of individuals or groups to face social disadvantages depends on variations in their abilities and social assets to confront them. Likewise, the origins and consequences of social vulnerability can be diverse and multidimensional. For instance, among the origins of social vulnerability may be the lack of economic resources, limited opportunities, social isolation, or racial and gender discrimination.

This chapter examines the relationship between social vulnerability, sexual vulnerability, and sexual health related risks among low-income youth in urban Ayacucho. The focus is on social vulnerability–situations that create sexual vulnerability of youth in the city of Ayacucho. These are situations that arise from particular social contexts that limit the type and level of control that these youth have over their sexuality and health, or over other valuable aspects of their lives related with them, such as their moral assets, sense of dignity, and respect. Focusing on the relationship between social and sexual vulnerability does not mean that youth's sexual vulnerability can be automatically explained by their social and economic realities and that they are passive victims of their life conditions. It is of my special interest to explore the relationships between structure and agency in the creation of sexual vulnerability of youth in a context where limited socio-economic opportunities for these

youth contrasts with their expectations stimulated by the globalization of consumption and ideas about modern youth, a common paradox experienced by youth in different places of the world.[45] Cases that will be presented here illustrate complex relationships between sexual vulnerability associated to poverty and unequal structures of social relation, and forms of youth agency and social integration to the labor and consumption markets. Likewise, I will show how cultural meanings about gender, adult-youth relationships, and indigenous people, are constitutive of power social relations creating social vulnerability and sexual vulnerability among youth.

Thus, the social vulnerability concept helps me overcome the limitations of the concept of individual risk. It also calls attention to the ways in which sexual risks and sexual abuse are shaped by social processes of exclusion, inequality and discrimination against social groups, as well as the weakening of their ability to respond. My approach does not underestimate youth's agency even in the most difficult circumstances of poverty and exclusion, but analyzes their forms of agency taking into account constraints that youth face in their social contexts and relationships, as agents that are not fully autonomous individuals (Ortner 1996). Following practice theory and contributions of anthropologist Holly Wardlow (2006) to the analysis of different forms of gender agency, I identify specific modes of agency among youth that are shaped by the local labor market structures, the parents-daughter or the master-domestic worker relationships, and other constraining structures present in the daily life of youth in urban Ayacucho. In this way, I approach agency in its dynamic relations with structures (e.g., institutions, interpersonal relationships, moral hierarchies), which shape both

[45] For example, see the work of Curtis (2009) about young girls living in Nevis, an island in the Eastern Caribe; Miles (2000) about poor girls in Ecuador; Comaroff and Comaroff (2000) about South African youth; and Liechty (1995) regarding youth identity and modernity in Nepal.

specific modes of agency and "the imaginable possibilities of action" (Wardlow 2006: 5-6) youth in particular situations. Likewise, I raise Kabeer's (1999) concerns about women's real choices, in order to broaden the debate about the conceptualization of agency in situations of extremely constrained choices. In doing so, I discuss the notion of choice itself, particularly, for girls in situations of high vulnerability to sexual abuse.

Finally, this chapter contributes to map the geographies of sexual vulnerability in the city of Ayacucho, as the gendered organization of the space surfaced as a key dimension in the production of social and sexual vulnerabilities among youth. In doing that, I followed Hirsch and colleagues (2009) in their approach to sexual geographies as physical and social spaces that enable and shape men's extramarital behavior. I expanded this approach to analyze the multilayered character of sexual vulnerability of low-income boys and girls and explored the cultural meanings about safety and risk produced in different spaces where sexual vulnerability is produced.

Life stories of low-income youth in the city of Ayacucho show vulnerability situations related to sexual risks and sexual abuse that occur in different spheres of their everyday live: at home, at work, and at recreational or gathering spaces with their peers. I prioritized these situations because I obtained more information about them. However, it is important to also recognize that there are other scenarios, such as sexual harassment cases at school and at academies that prepare students for entering university, as well as cases of subtle exchange of assets for affection among friends or "flings", which, for the moment, I will leave aside. Although situations of social and sexual vulnerability of these youth occurred and are

experienced in these specific spaces, they were produced at different levels[46], such as the domestic, neighborhood, municipal, and national levels, as I will show in subsections of the chapter.

Specific Ethical Considerations

At a birthday celebration, Chabela, a 17 year-old girl, told me about the time her stepfather sexually abused her. When she was a bit drunk, she told me she did not want to go back home, and that she drank to forget. Her best friend told me the rest and asked me to intervene without mentioning her. I was worried and the next time we met, I tried to take up our conversation where we had left off, that day leaving the bar. Chabela trusted me with her sexual abuse story, but she made it clear that I was not to tell a soul. She was embarrassed and was afraid her family's financial situation could get worst if I did. Whether it was for making sure I stopped insisting on the matter or because it is actually true, Chabela finally told me that now her stepfather was "calmer," and that he did not approach her anymore because she no longer had a boyfriend.

As in the case of Chabela, the others cited in this chapter were narrated to me after many conversations and under the promise that members of their social environment (family, teachers, friends, and acquaintances) will never find out about them. When sexual abuse was still going on or the abuser's threat was still present, a series of ethical dilemmas came up. On one side, I considered it was my obligation to provide them with alternatives for protection, given I was one of the few people who knew about the situation. On the other, I did not want

[46] Idea suggested by Jennifer Hirsch.

to put at risk the trust I had earned or violate the interview's confidentiality. These types of situations were considered in this study's ethical protocol, approved by the ethical review boards of Columbia University and of the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia. Likewise, it is explicitly stated in one of the items of the informed consent form signed by the participants that there are exceptions when confidentiality will not be maintained, under the principle of preventing teenagers from suffering any harm that might jeopardize their lives or their sexual liberty, such as the possibility of a suicide or sexual abuse. However, dilemmas and difficulties go well beyond what is formally accepted by youth. With the exception of one case, I was strongly discouraged by the participants to even consider reporting the abuser to an adult member of their families who might be able to protect them, to the police or to the prosecutor's office. Furthermore, one of the teenagers, after having confessed during an interview that she had been sexually abused, and aware of my interest in supporting her if she reported the crime, chose to avoid me. Another informant sent a friend to tell me that her case had been solved because her stepfather had changed. Ultimately, these reactions made me choose to stop my attempts of giving them any personal advice regarding how to face sexual abuses. The first option I evaluated, and then discarded, was reporting the abuse myself directly to the prosecutor's office, given that in the case of sexual abuse against a minor, it is possible for a third party to report it. I discarded this option because the youth, having hidden the identity about their abusers, made it clear that they would deny the abuse and that if I ever forced its unveiling, serious family problems would arise, which I would not be able to solve or take responsibility for. After discussing this with the staff of the NGO that carried out the sexual and reproductive health program, I talked about the cases with the personnel in charge

of these youth neighborhoods for her to be able to do some follow up—something she promised to do and did.

As in the case depicted above, most of the times, information about sexual abuse situations or participation in the work and sexual black market generated by the coca leaf and cocaine economy came up during informal conversations, when walking to the bus stop, in a bar or when leaving the bar. When we had a second conversation about these topics, the interviewees consented, once more, for me to use this information in the study. I explained to the interviewees, once again, that their names will be changed for the report, as well as all personal information that could lead to their identification, as offered in the study's consent form. Given that these cases are considered very embarrassing or illegal I have been particularly careful when handling information that might reveal by association the participants' identity. At the same time, with the aim of providing some specific socio-demographic references about participants of the study, the information about age or neighborhood of residence has not been changed. However for the publication of this study it will be necessary to evaluate what other changes should be made for preventing the interviewees from being identified.

Sexual Abuse at Home

In this research, sexual abuse is understood informed by the United Nations definition about child sexual abuse (UNICEF 2001): "contacts or interactions between a child and an older or more knowledgeable child or adult (a stranger, sibling or person in a position of authority, such as a parent or caretaker) when the child is being used as an object of gratification for an

older child or adults sexual needs. These contacts or interactions are carried out against the child using force, trickery, bribes, threats or pressure" (UNICEF 2001:20). In defining youth sexual abuse, I consider it important to make two remarks. First, low-income youth in the city of Ayacucho are in an intermediate situation in which they are still dependent on adults, but have economic and domestic responsibilities, in addition to capabilities and knowledge that allow them to make certain meaningful decisions on their own, although with different levels of autonomy and limited choices. Second, the notion of sexual abuse does not overshadow sexual agency of youth; but, it puts them within the framework of unequal power relations with adults in different contexts of their life and social relationships. Not all erotic or sexual relationships between adults and youth are understood as abuse; only those that are forced, occur within a context of coercion, or when adults use the power they have over teenagers due to different circumstances, for instance because of economic or other kind of dependency, because they are in charge of the child's or teenager's care or education, or because they have more knowledge or strength.

In Peru, during the decade of 2000-2009, from every five women who reported rape, four were under aged women, that is to say a total of 45,736 victims. Likewise, from every five male victims, four were under aged, amounting to 3,793 cases (Mujica, 2010: 28). The concentration of rape victims under the age of 18 holds for the entire decade without much variation. Out of the total of reports of violations of sexual liberty, in at least one of every three reports, the rapist had some kind of relationship with the victim, most of the time they were the victims' stepfathers or other male relative (Op.cit: 94). Some of the sexual abuse allegations involving 14-year old minors (the age of consent in Peru) may correspond to

statutory rapes reported by girls' parents. However, researchers associate the concentration of rape victims among minors mainly with the greater vulnerability of children to sexual abuse, and the fact that available statistics correspond to the reports registered by the national police. One would expect there to be a greater number of unreported cases among adults because stigmatization and victim blaming is greater when victims are adults (Mujica 2010).

Sexual abuse is also part of the life story of several youth in the city of Ayacucho. Sexual abuse cases analyzed here correspond to four teenage girls and one teenage boy. These stories are very similar to the cases narrated by key informants at the Municipal Ombudsmen for Children and Adolescent (known by its Spanish acronym, DEMUNA) and members of local NGOs that work with children and teenagers. In all cases, there were forced kisses and caresses, and in two, an attempted rape. The perpetrators were people these youth knew and trusted.

Cultural constructs and social structures contribute significantly to the production of sexual vulnerability and shape the agency of youth who face sexual abuse. The stories of my informants illustrate different situations of social vulnerability that have led teenagers to the risk of being sexually abused at home, and that have contributed to the continuity and impunity of the abuse. These situations are shaped by cultural logics of protection and risk, gender and sexual hierarchies of value, a series of material conditions and by the structure of social relations that underlie the access to financial resources and material goods: poverty and economic dependency, precarious houses, and inequitable gender relations that affect women's access to higher or better income.

Relationship with Adult Family Members or From their Circle of Friends

Miriam still looked dumbfounded when she told me: "I never thought my very own uncle would do that to me." Her uncle entered her bedroom and leaned over to kiss her. A first element that configures a situation of sexual vulnerability among youth is the fact that sexual abuses are perpetrated by people and in spaces they and their families consider trustworthy: their home or their relatives' home. Furthermore, in the case of teenage girls, the perpetrators are usually adults related to their care and well-being. To the degree that they are associated to protection and trust, these teenagers were not suspicious of the perpetrators' intentions whenever they were alone with them or at close physical proximity.

Borrowing Hirsch's (2004) assertion, the *casa*/*calle* dichotomy is both an approach to the analysis of sexual vulnerability of youth, and girls in particular, and a cultural construct that shapes adults' understandings about girls' social risks and sexual reputation. Sexual abuse by a family member is overshadowed by the geography of risk and protection that underlies parent and teacher norms, which strongly associate the home with care, restraint and decent girls. In contrast, the street is associated with risk, lack of limits and loose girls. This is related to both adult norms and teenagers' expectations, because incest is taboo and because relationships among relatives are expected to be relationships of protection and aid. However, these associations often do not correspond to reality. Adults, nevertheless, consider that this only happens in exceptional cases that relate to depravation or to some mental pathology; to a total absence of values; or to drunkenness. Associating sexual risks with family members, especially parents, destabilizes moral order and the structure of roles in which parents are caregivers and have authority over their children. Likewise, it questions the authority structure

in relation to other family members, structure based on age, as a longer life experience is associated to the possibility of offering help and protection, in exchange of receiving respect and obedience from children and youth. It must be noted that these expectations and social relationship structures do not depend solely on consanguinity, but also on parental roles. And, to that extent, the same is expected from stepfathers and stepmothers: protection and authority.

Sexual abuse is also committed by adults who may not be part of the victim's family. They can be acquaintances or friends, who the teenagers or their families' trust. This is the case of Marilyn, who at 11 was "groped" by a family acquaintance who rented her father's car. That man went to her house every day, and he was a friend of her father and mother. Marilyn suspects he had an affair with her mother, that he was "her lover," which explains why he spent so much time at their house when her father, who is in the military, was stationed out of Ayacucho. Marilyn believes her mother did not protect her enough because she left her alone with that person. She did not tell her father because she was afraid he would react violently towards her mother. She thinks her dad could have killed that man with his gun, and "the lives of all her family would become a disgrace, it was better to shut up."

Illich is the only teenage boy who told me he had been a victim of sexual abuse. It is possible that I did not get to know about more cases like this because boys were more embarrassed than girls when talking about sexuality (with me), in general, and because admitting to having been raped would damage their image as men. The girls trusted me more, and we had more opportunities to interact in informal spaces, apart from the interviews. However, the teenagers' stories, as well as the key informants' and the data from

organizations that focus on children and teenagers rights, all coincide in pointing out that sexual abuse is a situation that affects teenage girls in a greater measure. This is reflected in the reports made to the police, as well as in the anonymous calls made to help lines that have been implemented for giving out counseling or information in these cases.

Illich was caressed against his will by a member of the military, who was approximately ten years older than him, and who he considered a friend. One day, they went to a party together, and it got very late, so Illich decided to sleep over at his friend's house because it was closer. Ilich warned him that he did not like men; but his friend went on with it. He did manage to push him off and leave. He has not seen him since. He told me he does not want to remember that episode ever again because it disgusts him. He made me swear I would not tell anyone, because he does not want people thinking he is a *cabrito* (faggot), a derogatory way of calling someone a homosexual.

There are sexual and gender hierarchies of value that underlie the enormous shame expressed by sexual abuse victims: women feel dirty and disgusted; while men feel their manhood has been damaged to the extent that all known sexual abuses against men have been committed by other men, and it is associated with a feminization of males. Teenager's fears of becoming stigmatized are associated with hegemonic ideas about male and female sexuality, which end up lessening the seriousness of the aggressors' behavior that is frequently justified by the belief in an uncontrollable male sexuality, and by ascribing part of the "blame" to women because of their alleged abilities for seduction and complicity ("surely, you wanted it"). The prevalence of these gendered meanings about sexuality in Ayacucho, as well as in other places in Peru, is consistent with the conclusions of Jelke Boesten about the continuity

between the existing gender and racial violence and inequality in Ayacucho, and sexual violence during the time of the internal conflict (2010: 88). According to Boesten, the invisibility of various forms of sexual violence during the political conflict (forms that do not fit into the concept of violence as a weapon of war, such as opportunistic rape or rape by neighbors or family members,) is related to the way of understanding gender relations in times of peace.

It would be difficult to pin point the war's specific effect over sexual abuse of minors in the city of Ayacucho, because there are no studies prior to the conflict that could allow us to make a comparison. The cases I analyze in my study correspond to the city of Ayacucho, and are similar to other cases that take place in other Peruvian cities that were relatively less affected by the war, such as Lima (CVR, 2003). More important than that, the interviews with key informants do not allow identifying changing patterns among abuse cases before and after the war in the city of Ayacucho. The informants mostly highlighted long term structural situations, such as violence against women and children. We can state, however, that the internal war generated processes of disarticulation and rupture within families that have contributed to vulnerability situations that favor sexual abuse: women alone with scarce job opportunities or social networks in the city, who are financially dependent on their second partners; teenagers whose social networks for financial support and social protection have diminished or have been damaged.

Inequitable Gender Relations and Economic Dependency

Another element that contributes to situations of social vulnerability is the structure of gender relations that puts men in a dominant and authoritarian position in relation to women. Two

very serious manifestations of gender power relations in Ayacucho and other Peruvian departments are domestic and sexual violence against both adult women and girls. Of 1,440 cases of domestic violence reported in Ayacucho in 2010, all the victims were women. Half of these cases were motivated by marital or domestic problems. Also, nine cases of feminicide[47] were registered, of which six were committed by the spouse, and the remaining three by other family members. That same year, in 149 out of the 151 reported cases of sexual violence against children under 18 years of age, the victims were female. Existing data for past years show similar rates for Ayacucho as well as for the whole country. At a national level, 93 percent of rapes reported to the National Police, between 2000 and 2009 were against women (Mujica, 2011). However, the existence of an underestimation of sexual abuse cases against male youth cannot be discarded, given the fear of being stigmatized or questioned in relation to an established pattern of heterosexual masculinity and exercise of power and force. Most of the time, in situations of sexual abuse against boys, the aggressor is also male. Therefore, to the abuse itself we must add the victims' self doubt, fears and guilt regarding their own sexual identity.

The cases studied that I collected in my research show that in contexts of economic scarcity and gender inequity (which affects the access to education and monetary income), women are highly economically dependent on men, and that this in turn justifies men imposing their authority and domination over their wives and children. In this context, the report of a sexual abuse and the possibility of the aggressor of being separated from their mothers are seen as a serious threat against the family's economy, the access to valuable or

[47] Feminicide or femicide is defined as the murder of a woman by a man as a result of gender discrimination and violence. It has been recognized in Peru as a crime since 2011.

necessary material assets, or against the opportunity of studying in the future. Therefore, the level of economic dependency on their aggressor increases sexual vulnerability of youth as it leads to the continuity of sexual abuse.

Two of the interviewees were abused by their stepfathers, who in both cases were the main household providers. One of them, Maribel, was improperly touched by her stepfather when she was about ten years old and lived with her mother at his house. Maribel told me that she felt embarrassed to talk to her mother about what had happened. The second time it happened, he tried to rape her, and what kept Maribel from telling her mother was the fear of losing a place to live or eat because her stepfather had threaten her with throwing her out of the house or abandoning her mother if she ever said anything. At the time, Maribel's father was in prison, accused of collaborating with the Shining Path. Therefore she depended solely on her mother and her new family. During the long months she lived with her mother, Maribel did not escape the abuse, neither did she stop fearing his stepfather and still felt disgusted by him.

Another interviewee, Chabela, was caressed against her will many times by her stepfather when she was 16 years old. Now she is 17 years old and lives in constant fear of it happening again. She told me that her bedroom does not have a lock, but she puts a chair against the door, so at least if she hears her stepfather enter the bedroom, she would be prepared to escape. She does not want talk to her mother about it because she is afraid that if she tells her, her mother can leave her stepfather or report him, and so her and her younger sisters would lose the economic support he provides for them. Before her mother moved in with her stepfather they did not have enough money for food or services, not to mention for

buying new clothes or paying for a pre-university academy, like they do now. Her stepfather is a businessman, and what he earns is the household's main income. Her mother earns considerably less. Chabela´s biggest fear was that her younger sisters will not be able to study, and that she will not be able to pay for her pre-university academy where she was currently studying, as well as for the books she sometimes carried along with her. Chabela had not mentioned anything about the new and quality clothes she often wears, nor had she said anything about her brand of mobile phone, which sets her apart from her friends. However, the day of the celebration, when Chabela got drunk, her best friend told me that her stepfather buys her those things so she will not return to her grandmother's house, or look for a job, so that she will get out of the house less.

In another case, the abuse was committed by the victim's cousin, who she sees as an uncle, given that he is ten or twelve years older than her. This is the case of Miriam, the interviewee with the most precarious economic situation. Her house is not completely built, and it lacks basic services. Her father had to migrate due to political violence. His income as loader (*cargador*) in the market barely covers food. Her mother abandoned them because her father "did not take proper care of her", and her younger sister died, so Miriam lives alone with her father. Her house is located on a hill, and it does not have electricity or drinking water. She has no money for transportation or new clothes. At home, she does not have a big mirror to look at herself. That is why Miriam needs to go over her cousin's house, located in the same shantytown. Spending time at his house and counting on his financial help for clothes or transportation has put her at risk of being sexually abused more than once. After the first time he touched her, Miriam still returned to his house because she did not have where to

go to watch television, listen to the radio, or because she simply needed to look herself in the mirror. Her cousin has kissed her against her will many times, and she always protested claiming consanguinity. Apparently, however, he does not believe in the taboo of incest. She thought that with that argument she could control the situation, but she suddenly remembered her stepfather tried to rape her years before, and that is when she realized she "was risking too much just to watch television".

> […] My own uncle, the cousin I call my uncle, made me remember that my stepfather wanted to rape me. The thing is that I don't have a television. Now, for example, I live carelessly, I don't have running water, or a television, or light. We live with candles. We bring water from my neighbor, and, well, my father is not able to buy or pull water or electricity. My uncle has connected his electricity, he had his television, and I went there for the pleasure of watching television, of being able to, I don't know, it's just that the television is there for something, or for listening to his radio, or something like that. And because my dad didn't give me any money, I said: "uncle, please, money, I don't have any pants, I need this things, uncle please help me." "Don't worry." He gave me ten Soles [Peruvian coin], twenty Soles, but at the end, that uncle of mine, I always thought he saw me as a niece or as a cousin, but he saw me as a woman, and one day he caressed me. "What's the matter with you, uncle, you're my uncle," I said and he got angry. And again, I went back because of the TV, and one day he tried to kiss me… and he kissed me on the lips many times, and when he touched me like that, I also told him that. One day, I had a stain on my clothes because of my period. I only went to his house because he had a big mirror, and I wanted to see how my uniform looked, so I went. I was just changing and I my underwear was stained, I wanted to dry it I told him. So my uncle came. "Uncle, what are you doing here? I'm getting changed, go outside for a little while," I said, and he came. He told me: "I won't do anything to you." "Uncle, what's wrong with you? Let me go, let me go uncle," I said, "you are my uncle, how are you going to do those things." But there he also kissed me and that's when I started to cry. How am I going to let my uncle do that, for a television I can't do that, and I remembered my stepfather, and there I started to cry. What would have become of my life if my dammed stepfather had abused me? I would have gotten pregnant, and with that remorse, bitterness I am. Furthermore, my cousin lives next door, sometimes when he laughs, it is gross. I don't even like him laughing, or talking. (Miriam, 16 years old)

Miriam's vulnerability before her cousin's sexual abuse increases when her father goes to Lima to work and leaves her home alone. The fact that his cousin lives so close, and

the precarious materials her house is build of also exacerbates the situation. The roof is covered in part with corrugated iron, in part with plastic. Her door is a thin sheet of wood and the walls are only half built. All of this makes it easy for her cousin, or anyone else, to force their way in. Something sometimes she fears:

> He has not tried to do it again [touch her or kiss her], but I'm afraid because my door, for example, anyone, a gang member, comes, my door is not made out of corrugated iron, but it is not well built either, and if anyone kicks it, my little door falls apart […] I'm very afraid of the door and my wall… because the roof is not properly build, and anyone can get in through the wall. (Miriam, 16 years old)

I asked Miriam if she would ever report her uncle, reminding her that she had led video-forums about sexual abuse, explaining many times where and how to report these crimes. She regrets not having done it, and feels like she had to "pay him with her body." At the same time, however, she justifies the situation, arguing that she lacks of other sources of financial support. Her cousin is her only family, and ultimately, part of her very limited social capital. She does not think her father will support her, and she is afraid that if the situation ever surfaced, things could become worse, making her uncle even angrier. She believes reporting the sexual abuse will not set her free from the trap she is in, as she states below:

> This [sexual abuse] gives me a lot of remorse. I didn't like telling anybody, but now I regret it. I should have, I should have reported him… But… for him to help me at that moment or if I needed money, who could I ask for support? Because he was the only support I had, my uncle, he was just next door and had money… but at the end the filthy money he gave me, it was like paying him with my body. (Miriam, 16 years old)

Girls' economic dependency on their abusers is experienced not only by the poorest teenagers (ej. Miriam); it also occurs among those youth who are still poor but are in a less precarious situation in regards to their parents' income, housing conditions, and access to

basic services (ej. Chabela). Although the amounts of money or goods that their aggressors provide vary in economic value, in all cases they are goods or opportunities valued by youth due to the prestige, progress or entertainment possibilities with which they are associated. These include: clothes, television, mobile phones, and education expenses, among others. The ways in which the access to these material comforts and other prestigious goods shape sexual vulnerability of youth may suggest some parallels with the literature about HIV and sexual exchange in Africa (for example, see: Smith 2009). However, it can hardly be said that youth "choose" to continue to be sexually abused as a strategy to prevent social risks (economic and moral risks) that they or their family could face in the absence of the molester's support. Instead, we could speak of a kind of imposed exchange shaped by generational and gender power relations, the lack of local economic opportunities for poor youth and their families, and globalized and local structures of social prestige emphasizing consumption citizenship. In the following paragraphs, I will analyze the conditions of choice for youth who face sexual abuse and the ways in which they shape their agency in relation to sexual abuse.

Agency and the Conditions of Choice of Girls Who Face Sexual Abuse

Youth are not victims lacking all capacity to make decisions. However, having few or limited options, they ultimately tend to "choose" among different significant risks and costs. Shame, anxiety, disgust, and the fear of becoming pregnant are some of the costs of keeping quiet and not reporting sexual abuse. On the other hand, the interviewees know very well how and where to report sexual aggressors (since they have participated in NGO's workshops), but each of them has a reason not to report the crime. One of these reasons is not losing their

family social support, one of the scarce ways for accessing material goods they need and value on a day-to-day basis, means of protection against external threats, or support in case of emergencies. These men, who also represent or have represented a threat against girls, are frequently among their families' most important social assets. Certainly, these girls are fully aware that work is a source of income. However, as underage women can only access jobs that pay them less than men are paid, what they make is not enough for satisfying their needs. On the other hand, the girls who live with both parents say that their mothers' income is supplementary to their father's, not only because they earn less, but because their mothers cannot work full time given that they are also in charge of the unpaid reproductive work. Besides, these girls feared being stigmatized and ashamed after denouncing sexual abuse. How do choices that have high social, economic, emocional and moral costs for youth shape their agency? In all the cases of sexual abuse, youth have the choice to denounce their abuser, however none of them considered denouncing the abuser as a "real" choice.

The notion of choice deserves a careful discussion, particularly in situations when alternatives are scarce or become null because of their high cost, as in the analyzed situations of sexual abuse of youth. The concept of choice is usually bounded up in the notion of agency, as an important dimension of agency is the ability to make choices. For instance, agency is defined by Pande and colleagues as "the ability to make choices in a context in which alternatives are available and recognized" (Pande et. al. 2011: 2). However, usually choice is not theorized in terms of its social embededness and dynamic relationships with structures (as agency is understood in practice theory and for Bourdieu or Giddens). The analysis of the cases presented here can contribute to framing the concept of choice within the

interplay of agency and social structures, which shape the choices and real alternatives that youth have to confront sexual abuse. In doing so, the idea of a socially embedded choice, as opposed to the idea of an individual and autonomous choice, is particularly useful. Silence and not denouncing sexual abuse seems to be a socially organized choice for the youth and their families, at least in the cases identified in this study. As such, silence can be depicted as a "shared silence" by youth and their family to avoid moral and economic consequences of denouncing sexual abuse. In this way, silence can be depicted as a "shared silence" by youth and their family to avoid moral and economic consequences of denouncing sexual abuse. As Sheriff argued, this type of silence "is both a consequence and an index of an unequal distribution of power" (Sheriff 2000: 114). Girls were forced to stay quiet, fearing significant social risks: the consequences in the family's economy, the embarrassment of admitting sexual abuse while not being sure they would be supported and not stigmatized or blamed. For that, girls sought to escape from their aggressors by means of non-confrontational or non-explicit strategies. They tried to turn to other members from their social network, like stepsisters or a grandmother, to not be alone with him or living under the same roof as the aggressor. Sometimes, teenagers were successful in escaping from their aggressors in this way. In Maribel's case, finally, a series of events let her get away from her stepfather, and then lean on her father for financial support. For Chabela, liberation was only temporary; after sometime, her stepfather's control and power surfaced, when they were living, once again, under the same roof. In these cases, girls said that their family members, and particularly their mothers, may suspect something is wrong in the family, but they would prefer "to not see", "to not believe" or "to not talk" about the issue with them.

When she was ten years old, Maribel's initial strategy for avoiding being alone with her stepfather was to spend as much time as possible with her stepsisters. However, despite her efforts, her stepsisters, who were somewhat older than her, gave her a hard time and made her do all the housework that she, ultimately, did by herself and alone. Maribel never spoke about this with her mother, and she does not know whether she had any idea of what was going on. She kept quiet because she was afraid of facing her stepfather, who she has seen hitting her mother. Arguing Maribel's constant fighting with her stepsisters; her mother got one of her sisters to find a job for Maribel as a domestic worker in Lima. Maribel returned to Ayacucho when her father got out of jail. She lives with him now. Maribel confessed to me crying that she thinks that her mother suspected something was wrong in the relationship between her and her step-father and that's why she helped her leave their family home.

After the first sexual abuses, Chabela was able to convince her mother to let her move to her grandmother's house, under the excuse that she was going to take care of her. Chabela lived almost a year with her grandmother. However, when her stepfather learned she had a boyfriend, he forced her to go back home. He argued that she was too young to have a boyfriend and that he was a threat because she could get pregnant and leave school. To the abuse we should add, then, the attempt of controlling her sexual and emotional life. Chabela, however, kept seeing her boyfriend, secretly. Her mother did not contradict her husband, but helped Chabela so she could live in her grandmother's house. Chabela expressed ambivalent feelings about her mother. On the one hand, she feared she would denounce her step-father. On the other hand, she confessed that she felt alone regarding the risk of suffering sexual abuse again, because her mother "may suspect that there is something wrong with her

husband but she preferred to not really know what was happening, and only to help me leave".

Something similar happened to Miriam. Given that she did not live with her cousin and that she was less financially dependent on him, escaping the risk of being kissed or touched against her will by her cousin seemed easier than for the other two girls. When Miriam realized that the situation might get out of control, she stopped going to his uncle's house. However, this has not given her the peace of mind she expected. Her cousin has tried to turn her father against her. He told her father that she has a boyfriend, that he has seen Miriam with him, and then warned him that- as in Chabela's case - she risked getting pregnant. Miriam told me that the boy was a friend who walked her home once, and they stayed chatting for a while on her doorstep. Her cousin saw them and "accused" her to her father. When I asked about what her father would think if she told him about what his cousin did to her, Miriam said: "They are family, and my father believes my cousin more than me, they are together because they help each other, and my cousin would say that I am saying that because he made accusations against me to my father." What Miriam depicts is supported by shared social forms of protecting girls in families, they are usually controlled and watched by family members, and families usually suspect that risk comes from boys or men who are not family members and are out of the home ("in the street").

This view of choice as socially embedded or socially shared allows a better understanding of the reasons girls do not denounce sexual abuse although they know where to do it, as they promote as sexual rights advocators. The translation of the sexual rights discourse into girls' lives would imply a level of autonomy, individual agency and social

support that they really do not have. For this reason, youth do not consider denouncing sexual abuse as a real choice. In this regard, as Kabeer (1999) pointed out, it is important to qualify choice and analyze the ways in which power pervades it. Choices for abused girls are not made from a wide array of alternatives, rather they reflect the absence of realistic alternatives for girls. Gender and generational power relations operate not only through constraining girls' ability to make choices and through their feelings of fear, but also shape their views about these choices, and their mothers' abilities to support girls in the face of their abusive partners. Moreover, these kinds of situations may suggest a need to replace "choice" with a more transparent word that reflects both agency and structural constraints, particularly when alternatives are scarce or have a high cost, and by definition, choice implies the existence of alternatives.

Sexual Vulnerability at the Work Place:

Sexual Risk Contexts and Precarious Jobs for Youth

As it is detailed in Chapter 2, the type of employment Ayacuchano youth can access corresponds, mainly, to the informal sector. When youth do find jobs in the formal sector (eg. as clerks at stores, at the market or in restaurants), they are hired without taking into account their labor rights, as if it were a favor because they are minors. In general, working conditions are not favorable for most of Ayacucho's Economically Active Population (EAP); but it is even harder for youth because they have fewer options for negotiating, given their lack of experience or training. In addition, these jobs are less prestigious and with lower wages, or are jobs that imply greater risks. They are offered to teenagers because it is assumed that they would accept their conditions easier or perform these jobs better.

Limited economic opportunities for youth and the economic activities (illegal, informal or underpaid) where they work contribute significantly to their social vulnerability and to creating sexual risks. This section makes it apparent that there is a gendered political economy of sexuality which shapes opportunities, choices and risks for boys and girls in different ways. Gender organizes, in an important way, both labor structures and the forms in which sexual vulnerability and sexual risks are produced by these labor structures in public and private spaces in the city of Ayacucho. Here, I will take a closer look into two fields in which teenagers work and where situations of social vulnerability related to sexual abuse and risks arise: domestic work in the case of female youth; coca growing, and processing and transportation of cocaine sulphate related jobs, in the case of male youth. In the first case, sexual harassment and sexual abuse situations arise from the precarious work conditions in which feminized domestic work is carried out, from the arbitrariness socially justified by ethnic discrimination towards the workers, and from the low status appointed to this kind of work. In the second case, I am talking about potential sexual risks, mainly about the possibility of contracting STDs and HIV and contributing to unintended pregnancies, due to the increasing offer of both liquor and sexual commerce (illegally organized and where the use of condoms is not consistent) in coca and cocaine producing areas at the Apurimac and Ene River Valley – VRAE, its acronym in Spanish. Teenage girls participate from this offer, while teenage boys and young adult males who work in these areas are part of the clientele.

Domestic Work and Sexual Abuse

Domestic work is one of the least valued activities due its identification with servitude, the last link in the chain of exploitation. It is done mostly by women, teenagers, or young adults

who come from rural areas. It is considered a temporary activity that will allow them to adapt to the city and have a place to live, especially when they do not have any relatives who to stay with. The aspiration of "*muchachas*" or "*empleadas de la casa*" (domestic workers) is to find another job and acquire more education, which they expect that will eventually open new job opportunities and grant them "more respect" from society. The study's participants who are domestic workers are constantly looking for new jobs that will allow them to leave their "very abusive" bosses or change occupations, for example to kitchen assistants, waitresses or hotel maids.

Sociologist Gonzalo Portocarrero (1993), after conducting case analyses of domestic workers in Cusco (South-eastern Andean region in Peru), employed the term "total domination" for describing the master/servant relationship established between the domestic worker and her "master." Portocarrero revisits Weber (1922) for whom total domination refers to the type of domination in which the control exercised over the subordinate is expressed in all spheres of everyday life, not only regarding work itself, but also the use of time. Most of these domestic workers are minors, indigenous, and in many cases, abandoned women handed over by their parents to "godparents" or "masters." Portocarrero shows the different ways in which employers exercise control over their employees. He also states that these employers will go as far as their workers allow them to go. In order to achieve this, the employer's goal is to isolate and seclude domestic workers in the house, to systematically expropriate from their free time, and to attack them verbally and physically. Nevertheless, Portocarrero also points out that this type of domination is entering a crisis in the measure that democratic ideals (equality among every human being) are being disseminated in Peru and

that other job alternatives do emerge for these workers. In the case of teenage domestic workers in the city of Ayacucho, or of those who have worked temporarily in Lima, I believe that this form of patron/servant relationship corresponds, in many cases, to the employer's expectations but not to the domestic worker's expectations. There are many limits that prevent "total domination" from happening. First, isolation or total seclusion of domestic workers is not the case for most of the interviewed teenagers because they go to school, at night or by means of programs that do not require daily assistance, for example they only take classes on weekends; and even if most of them are live-in maids, many live with a relative. While a working day can amount up to 12 or 14 hours a day, these girls have a space for interacting with other people or institutions, some of which become important assets for those looking for other jobs, or to defend themselves from their employers' abuses. Among these institutions we find schools, churches, and NGOs, some of which advise domestic workers about their rights as employees and as women. In addition, some interviewees stated that the adult, a relative or an acquaintance, who got them the job were, at times, willing to complain in case of abuse; although they preferred them not to intervene fearing they would lose their jobs and end up in an even less favorable situation.

Maria and Lucia currently work as domestic workers. Maria starts working at six o'clock in the morning and finishes at six o'clock in the afternoon. At the moment, she only studies on weekends, but she used to go every day to a nighttime school. Lucia works as a live-in maid and goes to school every day at 5.30 in the afternoon. They have both been victims of sexual harassment and sexual abuse by the members of the household they work in. However, they have chosen not to report it.

Maria must bear leering remarks and physical rapprochements from the part of her employer's brother, who sometimes visits the house where she works. The last time he was over, he touched her, and she pushed him away; but she did not say anything to "the mistress" ("*la señora"*) because she did not see it as threat ("he is only teasing me") and she was able to stop him. She also felt embarrassed and did fear that if she told on him, her employer would not believe her. In her words: "She would think that I am flirtatious, right… Who is she going to believe, me or her brother?" Her current employer is her teacher's daughter. She does not have grown up children, who may be a threat to the domestic worker's sexual freedom; and her husband "respects her." Maria believes that, after all, she has been lucky, "thank God," with her employer because she treats her right, "like a daughter", because she doesn't yell at her and gives her advice. Her "masters" even rented her a dress for her elementary school prom party. However, she has not paid her for the last three months, claiming they do not have any money. That is also the reason why Lucia had to look for her current job, where her employer is more punctual with her paydays. However she yells at her constantly and gives her a lot of clothes to wash every day. That is why she is looking for another job. She has a neighbor, who she calls aunt, who has offered to introduce her to a woman who owns a restaurant and who could hire her for helping in the kitchen and cleaning.

For almost a year, Lucia had to bear sexual harassment from the "masters'" older son, a 21-year-old university student, that is to say, five years older than her. He tried to kiss her and started touching her, furtively, in a playful manner at first but, later, in a more open manner, roughly and against her will. Once, he went to her bedroom and tried to rape her. The boy was drunk, and Lucia thinks that is why it was easier for her to defend herself from him.

Otherwise she wouldn't have made it because he is taller and heavier than she is. At the end, Lucia was able to push him off and escape. Her employer, the owner of the house, accused her of sexually provoking her son for "then complaining, certainly." And after that she called Lucia: "*chola*, little slut, you surely want to get pregnant by my son, get out of my house," words that offended Lucia too much, who from being the victim became the instigator. Lucia tried to explain to her employer that her son had harassed her, and attempted to rape her; but she gave Lucia a slap in the face and sent her to pack her things for leaving. It was three o'clock in the morning. Lucia had to leave without receiving any pay for that month, or a compensation for being arbitrarily laid off. I asked her if she thought about placing a complaint or doing anything at all. She told me she knew she could report the attempted rape by calling the Women Emergency Center[48] toll free number or by going to the DEMUNA, because once, in a informative session at school, she had been told what to do in those cases. At the end, however, she was afraid to do it because she risked not being believed, and being mortified instead: "they are going to believe the *señora* more, there is no justice for poor people". She didn't even think about the possibility of receiving any compensation for being arbitrary laid off.

In the case of domestic workers, sexual harassment and sexual abuse happens within a context of racial and ethnic discrimination in which domestic workers are racialized and considered culturally inferior and uncivilized, or "less civilized" (Portocarrero 1993). Within the framework of master/servant relationship, employers make domestic workers feel that their origins and culture are worthless. Not only do they tell them so, but this is also

[48] The Women Emergency Center (CEM, by its acronyms in Spanish) is a resource location for women who are victims of violence. It is part of a Program against domestic violence from the Ministry of Women.

constantly reinforced as part of their everyday life experiences. Sexual abuse is one of the several forms of abuse these teenagers have had to experience. Other types of abuse have been pointed out, such as excessive labor, low wages, and mostly, failure to paid them as well as insults. However, sexual abuse is considered the most serious and humiliating of all, mainly because when it is associated with rape. Maria and Lucia highlight this connection between abuse and domestic work when they explain why they want to find another job: "it is just that working in a house, they always humiliate you."

The intersection between racial, ethnic, gender and class hierarchies finds its extreme expression in sexual abuse and rape as the cancellation of indigenous women's citizenship, and an expression of the power and control that is exercised over them as domestic workers. Domestic work makes them more vulnerable to sexual abuse due to three situations that feed on each other: social devaluation of this type of occupation; the domestic worker's subordinate position within social hierarchies; and the confinement of domestic workers in the employer's home, where most are live-in maids whose working day has not set limit. Access to the bodies of domestic workers, indigenous women or *cholas* (urban, working class women, who are in between indigenous and white or westernized *mestizo*) serving whiter or *mestizo* populations with more financial resources, is understood as a privilege of men in more powerful positions, claiming to these women's inferiority and reinforcing the existing relations of domination (Weismantel, 2001).

While domestic workers who I interviewed have talked about sexual abuse with their teachers or peers, and do know how to face the situation legally, they have not reported the abuses because they are aware that because of their inferior social position as *chola* and poor

they will be treated as untrustworthy people. On the contrary, they believe they will have to endure other humiliating situations, that they will be accused of provoking their aggressors. One of the most frequent insults these workers suffer in these and other similar circumstances is "*chola puta"* ("*chola* slut"). As I explained in Chapter 5, *chola* has at the same time a racial and sexual connotation (see Weismantel 2001). In this study, I have not found any reference to an excess of sensuality or desire of *cholas* as Weismantel did; but to more relaxed, less civilized, and therefore inferior in a moral order, according to which white/non indigenous/less indigenous is associated with what is urban and civilized. The lack of restriction in sexual morals is associated to a rural background and basic impulses. This point of view may be illustrated by what a teacher told me about her female students from rural communities: "they are like little animals and they have children faster, because they act on impulse."

In the cases studied, domestic workers – like other interviewees – only have a decisive reaction when an attempt of rape occurs, and tend to think that they can manage the situation or relativize the gravity of sexual harassment and sexual abuse. In some cases, there is also a game of seduction, expectations, curiosity or desire in which abused teenagers participate initially. This is another element that overshadows how social vulnerability and sexual vulnerability are related for domestic workers. As Peter Wade (2008) argued, sexual desire not only arises from white men or from those who stand in dominating positions. Games of seduction may build trust and expectations that appear to contribute to situations of vulnerability in relation to sexual abuse or undesired pregnancies. According to Homi Bhabha, it should be taken into consideration that the body can be simultaneously inscribed in

a dynamic governed by pleasure and desire, as well as in another governed by domination and power (Bhabha, 2002: 92). This mostly occurs, as in Lucia's case, when the first rapprochements start in a more playful manner, according to the codes shared among boys and girls the same age. Lucia says that there was a game that awoke some expectations within her, and even pleasure. Lucia's desire and illusion ended when her employer's son tried to rape her, and she was not able to stop him with words or will. She managed to push him off of her by chance:

> I did like the young guy, he is white, he has pretty eyes. He was a bit forward, he told me: you are pretty *chola*, and he made me laugh… I stopped liking it when started groping me by force, and then he wanted to force me in my bedroom, I don't know where I got the strength to push him off of me; if I hadn't maybe I would be pregnant by now.

Coca Growing and Contexts of Sexual Risks

Migrating for seasonal work is part of a supplementary economic strategy that many families in low-income neighborhoods from Ayacucho city use since they first settled there. At least, half of the interviewees depend on seasonal agricultural work for completing their family income. Given the lack of job opportunities and the low wages, looking for work outside the city of Ayacucho is necessary for many youth and young adults. Many of them pointed out that this type of work allows them to pay for their education and help their parents with other expenses and that at the same time, buy clothes, sneakers, electronic appliances or other objects that would otherwise be out of reach.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the growth of coca leaf has displaced legal agriculture in Ayacucho. In addition, other activities that demand teenagers' and young adults' workforce have emerged, such as mashing coca leaf for producing cocaine and other processing

activities, as well as its transport. According to ONNUDD (2009) coca growing areas in Ayacucho (provinces of La Mar and Huanta) and neighboring departments (Cusco, Junin, and Huacavelica) belonging to the Apurimac and Ene River Valley (VRAE), have the highest levels of coca leaf, cocaine sulphate, and cocaine hydrochloride. Of a total of 128 metric tons of coca leaf produced in the country, about 50 percent is produced at VRAE (63.422 metric tons). Given that the biggest part of coca production is destined to drug trafficking, the employment it generates corresponds to the illegal market. The presence of a group of the Shining Path in the area configures a scenario of violence and insecurity (Novak et al., 2011). As we will explain in the following lines, this employment context generates an economy of fun and pleasure that exposes youth to sexual risks, and consumption of alcohol and other drugs, which add up to other risks that threaten their health and on their lives in general. As it happens in different places of the world,[49] in the VRAE, a series of social dynamics and contexts favor a positive relationship between migration, and HIV incidence and vulnerability.

While children, teenagers, and young adults from coca growing areas are the ones who usually carry out these activities, there is a contingency of teenagers and young adults from the capital of Ayacucho and other areas that amounts to this workforce during vacation. In some cases, they go to family farms in the VRAE area, and in others, they work for their relatives' acquaintances, friends or contacts. The salaries these youth or their families receive from activities related to coca leaf growing are not substantial. Joel, who went to work at his

[49] These studies include seasonal laborers in southern Africa (Jochelson et al. 1994; Romero-Daza and Himmelgreen 1998), rural to urban migrants in Haiti (Farmer 1992, 1995), Mexican migrants in US (Bronfman et. al. 1998, Bronfman and Minello 1995, Diaz-Santana and Celis 1989; Hirsch et al. 2002, 2009, Muñoz-Laboy et. al. 2009), and Myanmar migrant male and female sex workers and factory workers in Thailand (Theede & Isarabhakdi, 2005).

family's farm in "the jungle" and ended up staying for two years after finishing high school (2007-2009), explained this to me, when I interviewed him. He was paid about S/. 1 per kilo and the rate ranges between 80 cents and S/. 1.50 in the VRAE area (Novak et al., 2011). Joel estimates that he made no more than S/. 600 or S/. 700 a month. As he states: "So much work, I lost two years, I could have been studying at the university. You cut your hands, and without electricity, water, nothing." Ilich earned about the same amount working on his family's farm in the province of La Mar. However this is more than what these or other teenagers would make in another formal or informal job in the city of Ayacucho. "As collector [in a bus], I made half of that, that's why I stayed, I had the idea of saving up for the academy and then apply to the university," Joel told me. In addition that was the money Joel needed for buying his computer and cell phone, which he now owns, "a modern one, for listening to music."

Pavel worked mashing coca, an activity that allows extracting alkaloid from the coca leaf in maceration pits. For this job he made a day what he had never made in Ayacucho: S/. 80. Only men are hired for this job because it demands strength. "It is a killing job, you mash, you mash the first hours, but you lack strength by the third hour and you get injuries in your feet," according to Pavel. Once, Illich worked as a *cargacho*, also called *mochileros* (backpackers) or *burros* (mules), transporting PBC to Huanta. With that money he bought the motorcycle he wanted so much; but after a few months, it got stolen. Getting the motorcycle was a big dream and it made him more attractive to girls. Pavel obtained US $ 200 per trip, he had never earned that much, and in American dollars. He confessed, however, that he was very afraid of dying along the way because the terrain was very rough, and the presence of robbers and contract killings that left people wounded and caused deaths. In addition, during

that time, two backpackers were arrested in San Francisco (capital of the district of Ayna, located at strategic place in the VRAE zone), so he got really scared and he has never done it again. After, he only went for harvesting during vacation.

In the case of the teenagers who took part in this study, the boys are the ones who participate in the market of coca production. The girls also work temporarily in agriculture, but in their relatives' farms that grow other products. Unlike their male peers, they were in all cases, accompanied by one of their parents or other relatives. However, it is known that teenage girls also work harvesting coca, and in activities related to the economy of fun and pleasure, that have emerged at VRAE with drug trafficking resources.

With the development of the coca economy, bars linked to sexual commerce at VRAE have proliferated. That is why they are called *prostibares* ("bar-brothels"). For example, 40 of these bars have been accounted for in Pichari (Inforegión 2011), a city of 15 thousand inhabitants in the province of La Convención in Cusco, located between Cusco and Ayacucho. These businesses do not operate legally as brothels but as bars, and do not comply with sanitary or legal norms that regulate the exercise of sexual commerce in Peru. Those who work at "bar-brothels" are mostly young and teenage girls from neighboring districts such as Sivia, Kimbiri, and San Francisco. They also come from cities further away, such as Tingo María, and even Ayacucho. Some of these girls arrive knowing what kind of work they will be doing, driven out by the scarce job opportunities at home, and lured by the possibility of better salaries. In other cases, they arrive by means of deceit. Municipal employees from the district of Pichari have reported the existence of mafias related to human trafficking that under false pretenses recruit underage girls from indigenous communities at VRAE, for

sexually exploiting them at the so called “bar-brothels.” They approach them with job offers in other types of services (cooks, waitresses, and cleaning aids, among others) that pay an attractive salary. Once they arrive at the workplace they are only given the opportunity to work as prostitutes for covering their transportation and living expenses.

Given this offer of alcohol and sexual services, a demand is constituted in a context where both are associated with masculinity, and where there are few opportunities for youth to obtain personal satisfaction and spend their free time after a risky or strenuous physical labor. Even boys who make less in the coca leaf and cocaine business have more money in their pockets when there are at the Apurimac and Ene River Valley (VRAE), than when they are in Ayacucho. Part of this money, not most of it however, is destined to entertainment activities organized at the VRAE with a significant participation of male teenagers in the offer and of teenage girls in the demand side. As they do in Ayacucho, the boys go to bars after their workday, but now they can “spend without worrying” and sometimes they hire the services of sex workers at these venues. The three interviewed boys had never had sexual relations with a sex worker before arriving at VRAE. Their first time was with their girlfriends or with a friend. They say that working in the jungle gave them the opportunity to do it because they have the money and they did not risk their girlfriend or family’s sanctions; but overall, the offer is bigger and it looks more “normal”.

For Pavel and Illich going to “bar-brothels” is one of the few options young men at VRAE have for blowing off some steam after a hard and often-dangerous day’s work away from their friends and girlfriends. For these two boys “bar-brothels” have become a sort of mandatory place to visit during their stay at the VRAE, where accepting the offer of a sex

worker is basically foreseeable. From their point of view, this happens because of the fact that the heterosexual male "nature" is always willing to have sex with an attractive girl, the availability of a sex worker with these characteristics, and having the money to pay for it come together at the VRAE. Pavel illustrates the situation as follows:

> Pavel: Where else are you going to go after you finish work and get paid, after breaking your back and going through danger, here most of the people who hire you have weapons? There is nowhere to go there. You are almost alone. Your friends are those who work with you. We go to the bar in a group, and they tell you: "let's go." And if you don't go, they pick on you: "oh, you're a "*pisado, pisadazo*" [a pushover, a major pushover"], or "*cabro, cabrito*" ["faggot, little faggot"].
> Carmen: That's how you started going?
> Pavel: I was invited by the other guys who work in the same field.
> Carmen: And, you go only for drinks or you also see the girls you've told me about?
> Pavel: If you are a man, you like women, and they offer, and they always offer, if you like the girl and you have how to pay, why not, you go.

Joel does not deny the arguments that Pavel and Ilich raised for going to a "bar-brothels" once a week "as something inevitable once you're at VRAE." However, Joel grants more weight to his own intentions of having sex with a sex worker, something he wondered about before arriving at VRAE. In Ayacucho he never built up the courage to go looking for a sex worker because he felt embarrassed to be seen with one given that "it is not so common for young people to go [looking for sex workers] as at VRAE."

In the city of Ayacucho there are some brothels located in well-known avenues, and at least two night-clubs which advertise in local bus terminals and vehicles that transport tourists. However, their public is mostly adult and foreign because of the cost and greater visibility. Sex work is frowned upon by adults, and it is not a common practice among the interviewed teenagers in Ayacucho city, who said they preferred having sex with their girlfriends or acquaintances. Neighbors have protested against brothels in their area due to

their association with drunkenness, scandal, and delinquency. They asked for relocating brothels. During the time I was in Ayacucho, a group of neighbors have even set fire to these brothel's facilities.

Once in the VRAE, Joel had more chances to satisfy his curiosity of having commercial sex because the offer is wider and more open. In addition, it is harder for acquaintances to spot in, and tell his mother or girlfriend. The VRAE is like a "*zona liberada*" ("freed zone") for Joel because of the possibility of having greater access to a restricted practice in Ayacucho. The issue of contracting sexual transmitted diseases, initially mentioned as a concern in the city of Ayacucho, is now minimized because it is assumed that sex workers from the VRAE have less probabilities to give them an STD, given their short trajectory in prostitution since they are mostly teenagers: "the girls who practice prostitution at the VRAE are mostly my age or younger, so they don't have a long trajectory, many come from their homes with lies and have been innocents."

Conditions in which commercial sex is organized at the VRAE produce vulnerable situations for sex workers as well as their clients, who would be exposed to contracting any STD or HIV. According to male teenagers, they don't use condoms consistently with sex workers neither do they have health cards, as is the case for authorized brothels. Youth explained the lack of consistency in condom use because of alcohol consumption, a situation associated to sex work at the VRAE as sex workers services are offered in bars, as it happens in other places of the world (UNAIDS 2001). I must add the idea that or experience according to which condom use diminishes the sensation of pleasure. Pavel illustrates the situation as follows:

> Carmen: And when you went with these girls, they have offered you a condom?
> Pavel: Not always, and as you are a bit drunk, so you don't think about it much. Most of the times they don't approach immediately after you arrive, but after you have had some drinks, they come up to your table and that's that, you're already a bit tipsy.
> Carmen: Do you remember, of all the times you've been with the girls at the bar, how many have you used a condom?
> Pavel: I've used it once. The truth is that not the others… It just that it's not the same with a condom, it feels better without a condom.

In addition, most of the women at VRAE do not have information about STD and HIV. Out of all the women between 12 and 49 years of age survey at VRAE, only 30.4 percent has any knowledge about STDs, and 52.3 percent about HIV, figures below those registered in Alto Huallaga, a coca growing area located in the Amazonian region, where there is a similar dynamic regarding the rise in sexual commerce and trafficking in teenage girls (UNICEF, 2006: 66).

According to available statistics, Ayacucho is not among the Peruvian departments most affected by HIV/AIDS. This disease affects mostly the most populated departments from the Coast and the Amazonian region. As of now, 71.5 percent of all AIDS notified cases concentrate in Lima and the Constitutional Province of Callao; and 29 percent in the rest of the country (MINSA 2011). According to the Statistics Department of the Peruvian Ministry of Health, the number of confirmed cases of HIV increases from 19 in the period 1991-2000 to 136 in 2001-2011. However, these figures may vary in the next years because the increase of clandestine sex work and seasonal migration at VRAE. It is not yet possible to know the impact of these processes in STD and HIV transmission at Ayacucho given that these social dynamics are recent, apart from HIV cases underreported and the little information available about STDs, because both youth and adults who participate in sexual commerce do not use

health services for taking the corresponding tests. Likewise, in Ayacucho, HIV preventive programs and sexual health services are limited to sporadic campaigns organized by the Ministry of Health, or NGO activities in few neighborhoods.

Sexual Agency and Gendered Labor Opportunities

Limited economic opportunities produce vulnerability and risks for both girls and boys, but in different ways. Labor opportunities for girls and boys depicted in this section reproduce the gender division of space between house/street and shape the situations of sexual vulnerability that these youth face. This, in turn, reproduces gender inequality in regards to the recognition of the sexual agency of youth. In the case of domestic workers, mostly girls, their sexual agency is usually not recognized or significantly limited by their subordinated position in hierarchies of gender, ethnicity and social class shaping the relationship between a "muchacha" and her "*patron*" (master). Choices for domestic workers are barely recognized as they are considered and treated as "inferior" persons living and sleeping in the same house. However, the choices for these girls when facing sexual abuse are greater than in the case of girls abused by family members in the family home. These girls were able to denounce to or escape from their sexual abusers as their relationships with them were not obscured by parental protection, economic support or affection, and thus were able to speak out about sexual abuse.

In the case of boys, situations of sexual vulnerability in areas of coca production imply sexual opportunities and sexual risks, peer pressure and exercising their sexual agency. Similar to the diverse settings analyzed in the work of Hirsch and colleagues, labor structure

in the areas of coca production facilitate sexual opportunities for young men in three aspects: "an abundance of available partners, space to meet those partners, and time not accountable to family and kin" (Hirsch et. al. 2009:201). The notion of "sexual opportunity structure" is relevant to understand how gendered patterns of labor and mobility increase the opportunity of Ayacuchano boys to combine drinking alcohol and having sex with sex workers. The proliferation of "prostibares" (places to drink alcohol and have commercial sex) in the coca areas creates both a sexual supply and a demand for youth who do not have other organized alternatives for spending their free time there (as temporal workers during school vacations) and feel free from their families' and girlfriends' eyes. Similarly to other men in different countries (see Hirsch et. al. 2012), in these spaces, forms of masculinity identity and masculine reputation that emphasize heterosexual activity and "taking advantage of the opportunity to have sex" are socially reinforced.

Vulnerable Situations in Recreational Spaces

This section illustrates how gender inequality in the recognition of girls' sexual agency and parental restrictions produces social risks for girls, which, in turn, shape situations of social and sexual vulnerability for these girls. The notion of social risk situates youth behavior and the risks they take in their social and cultural contexts, avoiding explanations that appeal to their lack of responsibility or emotional maturity. Besides, the different situations depicted previously show that gender inequalities and generational gaps regarding sexual agency and sexual reputation can be considered structural factors of social and sexual vulnerability for girls.

A consequence of the division of spaces of protection (house) and risk (street) in the norms and discourses of adults, was the organization of a sort of geography of restrictions and relative freedom for the youth, which at the same time demarcated ambits of social risks and tended to make invisible other kind of risks, as sexual risks and personal security. This spatial organization of risks and freedom was valid for both boys and girls, but had greater consequences for women for the reasons already mentioned. The permanent parental control of girls configured a series of social risks for them, such as being seen in nighttime entertainment spots (eg., discos), drinking alcohol, or in compromising situations related to their sexual reputation (eg., being alone with a boy); or being discovered lying to parents regarding where they were after school or work. These social risks had immediate consequences to girls' personal freedom, such as having their spending money cut off, losing their free time, and other sanctions (including verbal and physical punishment).

Punishment by relatives or other adults for girls who go to bars or discos, and the municipal prohibition of minors from entering entertainment venues (through a municipal strategy called "Plan Zanahoria" as "zanahoria" is a local word to say "*sano*", whih means healthy) produces a series of tensions and strategies for entering those places surreptitiously or in hiding. Going to prohibited places ultimately puts teenagers, especially girls, in more vulnerable situations before threats against their security and freedom, as well as before sexual risks. Hiding from adults and meeting in secret, clandestine or remote places configures, in the end, situations in which teenagers are frequently exposed to the dangers their parents pretend to avoid, such as assault and rape, accidents, or detention by municipal guards or the national police. In the case of women, inequitable gender relations that organize

social spaces and sexuality norms with a double standard in favor to men, increase girls' vulnerability before social risks, such as being exposed, judged, and punished. These social risks end up overshadowing sexual risks or other dangers among girls' preoccupations, even in the case of the most informed ones, such as youth advocates.

Women's Surveillance and Social Vulnerability

While at different degrees, teenagers, both male and female, experience restrictions and fear before municipal prohibitions for entering bars, discotheques, hotels and other forbidden places for minors, that is for people under 18. People in charge of these places obey these norms erratically, according to the importance municipal and police authorities grant the matter in different occasions. However, they are stricter with girls.

In addition, teenage girls experience greater social surveillance and vulnerability than teenage boys, regardless of the fact that these prohibitions are applied to all minors. In their case, gender and age considerations intertwine to make them be more careful than their male peers when they go to recreational places, because transgressing regulations regarding their presence in spaces considered dangerous for their security and social prestige is more strictly judged. Also, there is a greater interest of protecting them through surveillance. Teenagers of age or those who can enter bars open to the public in general due to a relaxation of controls do not always do so at ease. The same happens when they go to local festivities, to the "Alameda" (one of the public largest park in the city of Ayacucho) or to other recreational spaces opened to a wider crowd that includes teenagers, young adults, and adults. Huamanga, in spite of its moderate demographical growth over the last decades, is still a relatively small

city, and there aren't many entertainment spaces for young people to get together, or places for hanging out. Girls who go to these places are afraid of being seen by their relatives (e.g., older male cousins) or by their relatives' friends, who might accuse them to their parents. That is why, some of the times I went with them to bars, and we had to change venues in a kind of unstable geography of freedom and security, because they feared being spotted by a cousin or any acquaintance who might tell on their parents. According to teachers and parents, the fact that these girls are so closely watched is related to what I have already presented in prior chapters: female dignity built on sexual restraint or, at least "to sin but not make scandals," is still a relevant part of teenagers' social prestige and moral capital, which are important when negotiating with a current or future partner.

Remote "Protected" and Dangerous Areas

According to parents, the most protected or secure areas are family houses. For youth, however, it is the opposite, since in these places they feel more restricted or supervised by adults. For these boys and girls, these family places imply higher social risks for showing openly themselves as they are around their friends, acquaintances, or partners. On the contrary, the most secure areas for teenagers, where they feel at ease and less likely to be punished or criticized, are those furthest away from adult supervision. Among them we find the countryside, stretches of green areas, deserted plots of land, areas far away from the city, including some in Huanta (a province 3 hours near to Huamanga) and at Huamanga's outskirts.

The dangers these remote areas represent are very well illustrated by Monica's case, a 16-year-old girl who attended some video-forums organized by youth promoters. She met

with her boyfriend behind her mother's back, because she does not trust her very much and does not want her to have boyfriend so she will not have any distractions and focus more on her studies. Monica argues with her mother because she has failed some courses in the last three years and because she wears tight and low-cut clothes, "very provocative," according to her mother and teachers. Monica's mother is single and she works in the market. She does not want her daughter following in her footsteps: no formal education and more children than she can support. Monica could only meet her boyfriend in places far away from her house, away from her cousins or other relatives' routes. She could not go to discotheques or bars with him because she risked someone spotting them and, therefore, her mother finding out, which would result in more fights and restrictions. A safe place, that is to say a place out of her parents' control, is a sort of green area near the "Alameda" park. There, she could meet with her boyfriend and show her affection freely, until they were assaulted by a group of boys, who apart from taking their cell phones and money, sexually attacked Monica. They groped her, kissed her, and wounded her boyfriend with a knife when he tried to defend her. Fearing their parents' reaction and because "there was no rape," they did not report the sexual assault. Her boyfriend only reported the robbery. Monica has not been able to get over the trauma from the sexual assault, but she doesn't want to talk to anybody about it. She believes that her relationship with her boyfriend deteriorated because, since what happened that day, she started to physically reject him. She still fights with her mother about going out, her clothes, and her grades. She has not dared telling her mother about the assault fearing this will make her reaffirm her position of not letting her go out.

Sherling's case was also serious. Sherling went to grab some drinks with her friends, as far away from her house as she could. To avoid meeting with any acquaintance, they chose to come back home along a lonely and dark road; there, Sherling fell into a ditch, sprained her ankle and injured her leg, which later got infected. At the nearest health center, they did not clean her injury properly nor did they give her the antibiotics she needed. They only healed it superficially and sent her home. The next day she had a fever, her injury was covered in pus, and her leg had swollen. Thus, she went to the emergency room at the hospital. There they told her she had a serious infection and had to be admitted for a few days. Fortunately, after a long week, Sherling recover her leg but her parents have to spend a small fortune in medicines and other expenses.

To avoid getting caught by their parents or other adults, that is to say, for being less socially vulnerable before critics and gender sanctions, teenage girls have to hide whenever they wish to broaden their margins of freedom and range of entertainment spaces. However, "freedom in hiding" creates other vulnerable situations because they become exposed to other risks that they cannot control or manage. Social assets and formal mechanisms (i.e., the police, the ombudsman office, health centers) they could count on become limited because, by using them, their parents would know about where and with whom they were. Youth rather avoid their parents finding out what really happened to them in order not to get punished, and above all, to not have further restrictions in the future. Monica's story illustrates some extreme consequences: she was exposed to sexual and physical violence, and she did not dare to file a report because it would give away where and with whom she was at the time of the assault. When the possibility of dialoguing or negotiating with the adult world closes,

teenagers like Monica and Sherling lie constantly to their parents for being able to have a boyfriend, drinking alcohol or going to certain entertainment places. When their lies are exposed, this generates a vicious circle given that it produces greater mistrust from their parents, and they become more afraid to tell them what happened.

Prohibited or Clandestine Entertainment Places

Among other areas free from adult control, we find certain parks or hidden places within public spaces such the "Alameda" park, where there is a kind of vantage point that is frequently used for playing "*botella borracha*" ("spin the bottle") or getting together for drinks. Similar gatherings take place sporadically at any of the teenager's homes when their parents are away; but this is less frequent for girls because they are afraid of being seen by the adults from the neighborhood. Finally, there are bars and discotheques, some opened to the general public, some with certain schedules or spaces where they clandestinely let teenagers in, failing to comply with municipal prohibitions. In these places, teenagers drink alcohol in different proportions, but they tend to get drunk. They can also flirt at ease and the girls may look as sexy as they wish without being afraid of criticism. In a way, these are some sort of "*zonas liberadas*" ("free zones").

The girls, who at the time of the interview where between 16 and 18 years old, remember that since the third or fourth grade of secondary school (equivalent to the ninth or tenth grade of high school in the US educational system), they went to discotheques after school where they practiced some of the latest choreographies at that moment, such as those inspired in Eurodance with its characteristics electronic rhythms. Then, dance was an important way of interaction between girls and boys, since they are used to compete against

other girls and boys. There, many met their first boyfriends or suitors, and tasted alcohol for the first time. These were "sexualized" spaces where they could express themselves with certain freedom, and relatively safe and protected from adults' sight because of the schedule (early evening). Since the attendants were mostly teenagers, who like the interviewees did not have their parent's permission to be there, there was a tacit agreement for being discreet about these places once they were outside. Later, with the Plan Zanahoria, municipal guards' raids (operations for capturing people breaking the law) appeared, and entertainment venues for teenagers, bars and discotheques, became clandestine. These are closed-door venues that operate at certain hours (evenings) or in secret places, such as at the back of a store. They only allow the entrance of teenagers and do not allow in anyone who they consider suspicious, fearing that a municipal agent or police officer might enter. During part of my time in Ayacucho (from mid-2008 until mid-2009), despite being accompanied by a teenager, I was not able to enter any of these places. For that, it was only possible for me to go taverns or discotheques with the girls over 18 years old.

Some of the most popular venues for entertainment and for getting together, places considered protected or safe, were no longer so: they risked being surprised by municipal guards and taken to the police station. Nevertheless, these bars and discos are still very busy and part of the geography of entertainment, encounters, and freedom among teenagers. As Chela told me: "going out, dancing or having a drink have resulted in a combination of cool moments, moments of joy and relaxation, with moments of tension and fear." They had to look out in case anyone accused the discotheque or bar employees to the municipality, so teenagers could flee the place in line. This happened to Chela once when she went with a

group of friends to celebrate Valentine's Day (February 14th). However, escaping the raids and their consequences is not always possible. Being taken to the police station is only one of the reasons for being anxious about going taverns and bars. What they fear the most is that if they are taken to the police station an adult has to pick them up and commit to being more vigilant. However, even if girls over the age of 18 have still got some restrictions from their parents' side for going out, they are able to exercise some rights or powers as adults. For instance, 18-year-old teenagers can enter forbidden areas to minors in entertainment venues, and, when necessary, ask the police to hand over their under aged girlfriends. Rose, one of the teenagers of age, remembers that she was able to avoid Clarita some trouble with her parents, by telling the police she was her sister. Rose also told me that Vania was able to "save" herself from the raid because her boyfriend was over 18 and carries the same last name as her, so he was able to pose as his uncle. The police "handed Clarita over" under Rose's responsibility after having reprimanded her about her alleged sister's behavior. At the same time, it can be noted that controls and raids leave some gaps open for teenagers to rescue one another, without their parents knowing. For example, police officers not always ask for identification, thus it is possible for other teenagers or older siblings to bail them. A police officer told me, in an informal conversation, that it is a way to facilitate teenagers to leave and avoid more complications for the police when they have other priorities and limited resources: "there are several serious problems in the city, you know, gangs, accidents, for instance. We have to prioritize what to do with our personnel and the space in the police station."

Apparently, as time passed, the enforcement of Plan Zanahoria softened somewhat, probably due to the need of carrying out constant operations that, in the end, did not dissuade

teenagers from going to these clandestine venues, which still receive them. The taverns that were closed reopened in other locations and with different names, new discotheques have opened, and other venues have been remodeled. Between the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010, at least on weekends, I noticed some discotheques where teenagers were no forbidden to enter, and operated freely. One of these venues is a disco calls "Asia," where between 4.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. the costumers ranged mostly from 13 to 16 years of age. The main entertainment was the "*Perreo dance*" (dancing doggy style)[50] and a show given by two disk jockeys from a local radio station for a young audience. The alibi used by many of these venues was that they were opened for dancing but that alcohol consumption was restricted to people over 18 years old, which was not true in practice. Thus, youth perceived these places as relatively safer for them, because they were not frequently supervised by local police. However, the combination of alcohol consumption and the social organization of sexualized encounters in these semi-clandestine places produced potential sexual risks for youth.

Alcohol Consumption: "Compromisos" (Engagements) and Vulnerabilities

Alcohol consumption is part of the entertainment culture, one of the ways for blowing off steam in adverse situations, and one of teenager's mechanisms for fitting in among their peers.[51] Drinking liquor is one of the main attractions of going out to remote places, vacant

[50] *Perreo* is a Puerto Rican dance very popular among youth in Peru and in other Latin American countries, as well as among Latinos in the US, where is also known as "grinding." It is a reggaeton style of close-partner dance where usually a male dancer rubs (or simulates to do that) his crotch against a female dancer's buttocks, in imitation of a "doggie-style" intercourse.

[51] Alcohol consumption for social reasons is also very common among adults in Ayacucho, in rural and urban areas. Liquor consumption is present at every family celebration and local festivities, in which more permissiveness for teenagers drinking can be observed, especially, among boys. According to a survey carried out by the Peruvian NGO CEDRO (2007), Ayacucho is amongst the Peruvian

houses or houses where no adults are present. Having to drink alcohol is a common punishment when playing "*botella borracha*" ("spin the bottle") as well as being ordered to kiss a certain boy or girl or to take off a garment, which it is made easier with liquor as girls told me. The latter, however, does not imply overstepping all limits. In this regard, Marylin told me about her experience playing spin the bottle:

> Yes well, you've never played? […] when you are drunk, after the third punishment, fourth punishment, that they make you drink, even if the guy you have to kiss is a bit ugly, you just do it, you just close your eyes, and a little peck, nothing else… it's been worse, once, when I was asked to take off my brassier… and I did take it off. Oh, but carefully not so they wouldn't see anything! Fortunately, it wasn't my turn anymore, or I maybe they'll have told me to take off my shirt, but I wouldn't do that, even if was tipsy.

Drinking alcohol as part of the challenges when playing spin the bottle was not mentioned among the contexts in which teenagers are forced to drink liquor, because boys and girls assume that whoever accepts playing the game, already knows that drinking is one of the challenges. In addition, drinking liquor is part of the interaction expected in bars and discotheques. The motivations for drinking expressed by the interviewees are mainly having fun or rejoicing, however, in many cases I found an underlying reason: "blowing off steam," that is to say, forgetting or mitigating problems and sadness, including love sorrows or uneasiness and having constant arguments with their parents. A second motivation for consuming alcohol has to do with fitting in or maintaining a relationship with their peers. Drinking with friends, boys and girls, was also a way of showing solidarity in times of sorrow and joy, and of sharing moments that became after in common memories, and originated jokes and secrets among their circle of friends.

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departments with the highest alcohol consumption levels, along with Cusco and Junin. This study, however, does not explore in depth into the characteristics of adult practices.

Most of youth say that they drink voluntarily, according the motivations described above. However three out of the 20 female interviewees have felt pressured by their girl friends to drink alcohol, and that they did it to preserve their friendship bonds. While for their girl friends pressuring them to drink is a way of "liberating them" or of integrating them to what is fun for the group, for these three interviewees, it is still a "commitment" or an obligation, and even a way of dismissing different ways of thinking, and of not understanding their low tolerance to alcohol. One of these girls is Micaela. She is constantly being confronted by her female friends for not drinking, who ascribe this to the power her boyfriend has over her. He does not let her drink, something they consider sexist because he does drink alcohol with his friends. Among Micaela's own reasons for not drinking, however, we find her boyfriend and mother's external pressure, combined with her own fear of drinking because she is a "lightweight," and it affects her health. Once, she fainted and had to be taken to a health centre. The other interviewee is Charo, whose religion forbids her from drinking. However she has done it once in her friend's home, in a very special occasion when the four girls that were there shared intimate and sad stories about their family. It was an exception, she said. For her, drinking liquor has a strong moral connotation. The third girl is Luz, who drinks considerably less than her friends. Alcohol does not agree with her, "it clinks her," she gets lightheaded sooner rather than later, and then gets sad or cranky. She has had drinks out of "obligation" to her friends, and she believes that being scarcely motivated also contributes to her little tolerance for alcohol as she expresses here:

> It's like you don't really want to go and that makes it easier for it to get to you [alcohol]. It doesn't matter, it's out of obligation. Of course, you get bored of obligation. But that's hypocrisy. Drink, give me some, drink from here, you're going

> to end up bad. So, a couple of times I've drunk with them, and once I got into a big fight with Clarita. (Luz, 19 years old).

Thus, consuming liquor is a way of maintaining or strengthening informants' social networks, a critical asset for youth, and for their rituals or codes of interaction, especially among the group they have stronger bonds with and share more time and complicity. The expression "*tengo un compromiso"* ("I have an engagement") for referring to gatherings or celebrations, clearly illustrates what these events mean in terms of their relations with other people or with their circle of friends. At the same time, alcohol consumption contributes to produce situations of vulnerability and sexual risks. One of the risks associated to alcohol consumption is the increase of possibilities of having unprotected sex, as this study confirms and as it has been shown in other research studies carried out in Lima and other cities of the Peruvian coast and highlands (Cáceres et al., 2000, 2002, 2007). The study referred to above also found a link between higher alcohol consumption levels, violent behaviors, and non-consensual sexual activity. Women who drink (or take drugs) are stigmatized as "easy," making them vulnerable to non-consensual sexual practices, mostly carried out (had sex) without protection. It is hypothetically stated that women assume "social guilt," and that is why they do not report these harassments, or why they "do not remember" them. According to this logic, men legitimize non-consensual sexual practices with women under the influence of alcohol (Cáceres Op. Cit.: 86). In my study, I found situations in which teenagers' sexual liberties are jeopardized when they are drunk. However, rape is not perpetrated thanks to their peers' intervention. There is also a male attitude that tends to criticize the fact that women drink, but with certain variations that go from "blaming" society and not the girls for their

individual actions ("women can also drink but in moderation, given the greater risks they are exposed to in this sexist society"), up to stigmatizing them as irresponsible and "easy" ("well, she drinks, she already knows what to expect").

An additional element that influences teenagers' vulnerabilities and risks of youth is associated with the clandestine consumption of alcohol. Given that it is forbidden to sell alcohol to teenagers, liquor sold at certain hours in the afternoon when teenagers attend these venues-, is offered with the appearance of a soda with alive colors and sweet taste, but these drinks contain a mix of liquors and canned juices. Popular brands of this kind of alcoholic drinks have attractive names related to sexual activity, such as "Triple X", "Punto G" and "Climax". These liquors' prices are relatively low. A jug for approximately eight servings is around S/. 4.00 (equivalent to $1.50). The liquor is sweet wine, in some case rum or vodka, or any other liquor whose nature I cannot identify every time, but they are always diluted with great amounts of drinks with colorants or water. Boys do drink beer or stronger liquors when they go out with other boys and when they have greater purchasing power because they have just been paid or because they have more stable jobs.

Interviewed girls and those I went to bars and discotheques with are not only not used to drinking beer, but they think it tastes "bad and strong." This statement made sense to me when I tasted what they drink: sweet and very diluted drinks. After many rounds and hours of chatting, joking, and laughing, I can observe a higher level of drunkenness. This implies that, ultimately, teenagers invest more in getting drunk, in comparison to other drinks which may be more expensive but stronger. These liquors, at least in the case of girls, might have conditioned their taste and generated a demand according to that taste and price. The

disadvantage, as Kelly and Clarabella told me is that "you get tipsy without noticing, because the liquor is soft," which makes it difficult to know when to stop. Also, many claimed having had headaches and stomachaches that go away after a few days. Therefore, they do not think it is serious, and they blame it on not knowing how to drink as well as on the liquors' low quality. Clarita is a regular costumer at the taverns located at the Magdalena neighborhood and has a reputation for holding her liquor. She thinks, instead, that what they usually drink has the advantage of not making them so tipsy, so they can resist many hours "joking around and having a good time, you laugh at everything." She claims "knowing her limits", that is, "when you start seeing double, or you get up and your head starts spinning, your friends also tell you when you're speaking funny, nasal, and such…"

Social Protection and Sexual Protection

In a context of secrecy or semi-secrecy, the girls' main concern when they go to remote places with their boyfriends or friends, or make plans for going to a bar or discotheque, is not getting caught in a raid or being spotted by a relative who might tell their parents or other meaningful adults. If that ever happened to girls, their future outings would be much more closely observed or restricted. In other words, they will have to endure tighter controls. Other concerns or risks are overshadowed, omitted or put in second place. Sexual risks and the ways to prevent them do not appear within teenagers concerns until they are already confronted by them. This is even the case for some youth advocates. Despite their expectations for meeting a potential partner or for approaching them, these girls and boys do not think about carrying a condom with them, as some of the activities organized by NGOs in which they participate

encourage them to do. The exceptions are two out of 20 youth promoters, who already have a partner and take him/her along to these venues.

Only in posterior reflections about situations of sexual risk, boys and girls thought about why they did not use protection or, in the case of the girls, why they did not demand the boys to do so. Many reasons converged. One is that in most cases, when they go to a discotheque or to a bar, they do not plan to have sex. Furthermore, planning to have sexual relations and carrying a condom has negative connotations among girls: they could be labeled as easy or sluts. In the boys' cases, carrying a condom might show their intentions of having sexual relations, and therefore they risk being rejected. When opportunity spontaneously appears, they mitigate the situation by saying that they had sexual relations "without thinking," "because we were a bit tipsy," or "I couldn't control my body very well." Even if one the motivations for going to a disco or a bar meeting someone attractive and having fun with him or her, they do not foresee having sexual relations, "no more than necking, or if you go with your steady partner, you mostly just make out." This is what happens in most of the stories told by the female interviewees. However, in four out of the 15 cases there was sexual intercourse after going to a bar or to a discotheque. Regarding the boys, this happened in eight out of 20 cases. Most of the interviewees—boys and girls—who had sexual relations after going to a bar or discotheque, did it with their boyfriends, or girlfriends, or with a friend. Only in one of the cases, a boy had sexual relations with a teenage girl she had just met that one time at the bar; she was a friend of his friends.

Usually, teenage couples do not plan when they will have sexual relations, due to moral and gender restrictions that make sex a topic not spoken about freely. Once they have

sex, there are some understandings that link sex to certain visits to their homes (when there is no else at home) or to some outings to the countryside or to a "seedy joint" (*antro*) for special occasions. The second reason is related to the amount of ingested alcohol. Many interviewees admit that after drinking too much, they do not remember clearly how they agreed to having sexual relations or to making out with a boy. Likewise, boys and girls claim that when they are drunk they do not think about wearing a condom, or they use it randomly. Out of the twelve participants who declared having sexual relations after having consumed liquor for several hours, only one used the condom consistently and it was the case of a male youth promoter. This result is not very different to what a study carried out in three Peruvian cities (Lima-Callao, Iquitos, and Chiclayo) found. According to it, the percentage of young people who used a condom every time they had sexual relations under the influence of alcohol does not exceed 25 percent (Cáceres et al., 2007: 34).

Social protection

On the other hand, female social networks had an important role in protecting peers from sexual abuse and sexual risks when they were drunk, and had been effective when strangers tried to approach them, touched them, or when they tried to enter the bathroom with them. Safety mechanisms were enforced even when almost all group members were tipsy or drunk, such as going to the toilets in groups of two. Girlfriends' protection eased up a little, but not completely when friends or acquaintances approached their friends. Girls assumed that the boy could be trusted and that he would take into account the consequences of social controls and sanctions. That is to say that if something ever happened their girlfriends and boyfriends would know about it, they could identify him with whatever happened, and so they could

reproach or sanction him. When the girl's boyfriend touched her, there was no intervention from her female friends because they assumed that their physical and sexual contact could be proper, unless the girl in question had specifically requested protection or commented to her friends that her boyfriend is pressuring her. Even in this last case, there were some limits to the girlfriends' intervention, because the main idea was not to meddle for not compromising the couple's privacy or to avoid being ridiculed.

Arriving home with signs of having had any alcohol is something teenagers want to avoid for not getting caught by their families or neighbors. This is especially true for girls, because it puts them in a position of extreme vulnerability before their parents, who would "throw these incidents back to their faces" anytime they want to justify punishments and more drastic restrictions. The ways they find for getting out of these situations vary according to the level of level of drunkenness. Their girlfriends play a crucial role in looking for the best solutions and protecting the teenager when she is too drunk. Some of the solutions involve collecting enough money to feed them, giving them enough water, mints, and gum that will let her get better and not smelling of alcohol. At the same time, they look to protect them from boys, so that they will not "take advantage of her," and they always try to stay by their side, and not leave them alone with the boy approaching her. These solutions are subjected to the level of drunkenness the girlfriends are in, to their capability of having the reflexes for protecting the most affected by the alcohol. Therefore, the time they spend waiting outside the bar for the alcohol's effect to wear off ends up shaping another vulnerability situation. It is a moment when boys and girls are more acquainted with each other and when their reflexes are much slower, and they must, or prefer, spending some time together before taking home the

drunkest girls. There, some kisses and caresses are stolen, and sometimes reciprocated; but at the same time, discussions and ambiguous situations about what is consensual, what is desired arise and then, about what is remembered, and what is not. Rosita (19 years old) told me a very illustrative story regarding this type of situation. I have included the whole conversation to illustrate the advances, rejections, apparent consent, and fragility of the forms in which girls protect each other of situations of sexual vulnerability. Rosita depicted circumstances that show me that although girls' forms of solidarity could be crucial for protecting each other, alcohol consumption may debilitate their efficacy in an important way. Rosita and their friends rented rooms in a hotel as her friend Jenny was very drunk and could not return to her house in that way because their parents' punishments. During the whole night, Rosita had to avoid that one of the boys could take advantage that Jenny was drunk and had sex with her, but Rosita was also tipsy and sleepy:

> Rosita: I have a friend, Jenny, who's like that [she gets drunk easily]. One day we were out until 3.00 a.m. in a disco, but then she was in a bad condition, she was in a bad condition. I didn't know what to do at that moment, what do I do? Where should I take her? I didn't know what to do. We had company, my boyfriend and a friend who wanted to be with her. Suddenly they come up with the idea of renting a hotel room, one for the girls, and one for the boys, separate rooms. I go into the room and put her in the shower, we were really worried because the effects wouldn't wear off.
> Carmen: You rented [the room] because you couldn't go back, or what?
> Rosita: I, for example, couldn't go back, we agreed to go to her house, but she was really drunk, and she couldn't be seen like that at her house: "My mother is going to kill me, my father is never giving me permission again, and he is going to tell me everything," she said. So then I go into the bathroom, and lock the door and stay under the water for a while. Meanwhile she wasn't doing so well, she had lied down and she thought I was going to lie beside her. I opened the door and when I looked up, the guy was sleeping beside her and I told him: "hey, I'm going to sleep with Jenny." "Go away, go to your boyfriend," he told me. "No, I'm sleeping with Jenny, I'm sleeping with Jenny." That's when my boyfriend grabbed me, "come, you're going to rest here." "I don't want to, I don't want to," I made a tantrum, "No, I rather put a mattress here and sleep on the floor, all right I'm going to sleep on the floor." And when I turned to look, Jenny tells me: "Rosa, Rosa, there is a hand touching me." "Hey, leave

her alone, don't be like that!" "Rosa he is touching me," she said, and was like that. At times I saw the guy was touching her, and at time she also touched him." "What?!," I said, and I got into the bed, "no, I'm not going to forgive him, I'm going to sleep with you, between the two of you, I want to sleep with my friend" and so on. But she wouldn't let me lay there. "Go with Yony [Rosa's boyfriend]," she told me. "All right, but sleep," I told her.

After a short while she was asleep, I was sleep, and she says: "Rosa, there's someone in my bed." I got up, and everything was really dark, the light was turned off, the television too and I: "What? Sleep, shut up. Just go to sleep, nothing is going to happen, you're very fuzzy." And so, "Rosa, Rosa" she yelled and that's when the she started liking the guy, at times she shut up and let the guy touch her; at times she told me: "look Rosa he's not doing anything," Jenny, spoke like this [to the guy]: "I'm sleepy but you're in top of me", and I'd throw the pillow at her again, and then she'd calm down again. And, every time the guy touched her, she'd pinch him, bite him, scratch him, and until the guy pulled his pants down and put her brassiere under his socks on his feet; that's why when Jenny got up to look for her clothes she couldn't find them. According to her, nothing happened; the guy didn't do anything to her. But because the guy touched her, kissed her, she told me that she kind of felt like it at time but she said "no," with a stranger it was weird, she couldn't but she did felt like it at times. How would it be with someone who is your boyfriend, then, you are more willing, and at that moment, even if you don't know if you're going to remember or have the will power to stop if there is no condom."

Most of the interviewees—male and female—do not question their parent's authority to demand explanations for being drunk when arriving home, when they have also seen their parents very drunk. The underlying reason in all cases is related to the idea that drinking alcohol in large quantities is a "normal" and expected practice at celebrations and other moments, which is part of their personal and group experiences. Even if within a family, the father is the one who drinks in excess most frequently, many of the interviewees have also seen their mothers very drunk in some family celebrations of local festivities, such as carnivals or traditional parties. Since they were kids, they have all taken part of family "*compromisos*" ("engagements") and local parties. As Dorita illustrates it: "there they go from a little bottle to a pack, and from a pack to many packs." This does not mean that there

is not a critical look towards the excessive consumption of liquor. However, the consumption itself is not what is questioned, instead they criticize the way drunkenness is manifested and handled, as well as the implications for children and relatives. This phrase is quite common: "I don't know why they drink if they are going to get like that." Among the effects of alcohol on their parents' behavior that most affect them, teenagers mentioned: fighting among them remembering their differences, and proved or alleged infidelities, excessive jealousy, violent behavior, constant weeping, and remembrance of sad moments. These effects can be so significant that in some cases their parents do not want to go to family or their children celebrations together for avoiding fighting and scandal or aggressions that make all guests uncomfortable.

In relation to the prohibition or restriction of alcohol consumption among teenagers, they all agreed that it was justified in cases in which consumption is rather frequent (every day) or when it significantly affects school attendance, or performance. In these situations the interviewees agree with their parents, stating that it is wrong for teenagers to get drunk because it affects their education and throws their parents efforts away, as well as their own. In other cases, when consumption is considered "normal" or "moderate" (at parties, "engagements," weekly or every two weeks), which is the case for most interviewees; they generally do not consider it a problem. The exceptions are some boys and girls, for whom drinking alcohol is not healthy, socially appropriate for girls ("it looks bad on a girl"), or morally correct for religious beliefs, for instance, among Evangelicals and Mormons. Then, for most interviewees, getting drunk "sometimes but not every day" is not considered

precisely a problem. It is only so when punished by their parents or picked up by the municipal guards.

Social Vulnerability, Sexuality and Agency

In this chapter, I covered different situations of social vulnerability that affect, in different manners, the sexual vulnerability of low-income boys and girls, exposing them to sexual abuse, and to the risk of becoming pregnant or contracting a STD. Sexual vulnerability is not inherent to poor youth in Ayacucho. It is socially produced in organized spaces in which different forms of social inequality, family norms, youth assets and forms of agency interact in a complex way. Social and sexual vulnerability are shaped by the characteristics and limitations of the social and economic opportunities and resources available to youth, which are related to teenagers' poverty level, social resources, and social standing within hierarchies that depend on ethnic background, gender, age, and condition (e.g. rural migrant or the children of rural migrants) or type of migration (temporal job migration; forced migration due to political violence).

There is a geography of sexual vulnerability produced by local, regional and national structures of inequality, which illustrates its multilayered character. One example is the case of girls who are disproportionately affected by sexual abuse at their familiar home. Sexual abuse at home is the hardest for teenage girls to handle. The sexual vulnerability of these girls lies in the fact that they are threaten by their relatives on whom they depend economically or with whom they have to share the same physical living space. The level of economic dependence of these girls and their mothers on sexual abusers is related to forced migration

and disarticulation of the family due to political violence, which are regional dynamics underlying poverty in Ayacucho. Likewise, this economic dependence on male providers is associated with the scarce educational and economic opportunities their mothers have, which are shaped by gender inequalities and ethnic discrimination against Quechua women, and by the historical marginalization of the highland region of Ayacucho in the Peruvian national economic model. Besides, sexual abusers are adults from whom girls expect protection and whose authority over them (as teenagers) is socially recognized and culturally legitimized.

Most of the time, situations of social vulnerability described here do not occur in a state of total defenselessness or passivity. However, the level of agency youth can exercise is limited by their access to assets or resources that operate as protective factors. The latter allow subjects to get back on their feet and even take advantage of the limited opportunities they can access (Salazar et al., 2005). In this chapter, I show the need to conceptualize the ways in which agency is exercised in situations of extremely constrained choices. In doing so, I discuss the notion of choice and the need to qualify it in these situations. I emphasize that choice is socially organized and pervaded by power structures, which limit opportunities, strategic compliance and perceived possibilities. Likewise, I show that the available alternatives for youth in the depicted vulnerable situations are limited to hidden or risky choices, which may contribute to new risks or vulnerabilities. In these situations, peers' agency and social resources are relatively powerful assets compared with other available assets for facing situations of vulnerability.

An example of hidden or secret choices, are the scarce alternatives available to the interviewees for stopping sexual abuse, which consist of escaping by means of pretexts and

avoiding being alone with the abuser without saying anything about the abuse. The success or fragility of these options varies in relation to different factors, such as the extensiveness, strength, and nature of the social networks into which youth have inserted themselves over the years. The biggest limitation in all cases is not being able to report the abuse or their stepfathers or uncles' threats, despite the information they have on how to proceed. Apart from economic dependency, we must also mention a series of cultural norms regarding the moral values and sexual prestige of women, which underlies the silence or secrecy about abuse. Therefore, any alternative to get away from the abuse is in reality only running away, while the abuser stays at home.

Choices of youth in vulnerable situations are many times risky choices. For instance, some situations of sexual vulnerability faced by teenagers in work and entertainment environments, are configured in a paradoxical process where there is a complex tension between seeking to increase their social or economic assets or agency—which they may achieve— and the risks directly or indirectly associated to these opportunities. Some of the youth strategies to escape or overcome local structures of inequalities and discrimination imply working in risky places and jobs, such as the illegal market of the coca and cocaine production. Besides, gendered parental restrictions and surveillance imposed on girls lead them to escape to hide and obscure places to meet boys or have entertainment, which many times imply dangers and unsafe environments. Even more, situations of social and sexual vulnerability may become accepted or never confronted because it is assumed that they are the only ways of having more autonomy, being recognized as equal, or achieving aspirations configured by globalized stereotypes of gender and citizenship. These "modern" or

prestigious ways of being a teenage boy or girl imply a different presentation of the body-self and consuming certain goods from the transnational markets that give them value, prestige and identity, such as fashionable and brand clothes, electronic gadgets, bikes or other objects that symbolize different teenage subcultures.

Not all participants in this study interpret or experience equally similar situations of social vulnerability. Likewise, they do not have the same aspirations, goals and coping abilities. However in spite of their differences, social networks stand out as one of the main mechanisms for protection in the face of vulnerable situations among teenagers, even if its effectiveness may vary. All interviewees have information about ways they can prevent sexual risks, as well as on how to identify and report sexual abuse. This is in large part a result of having participated, more or less actively, in an education and informative project carried out by an NGO. This information, however, is seldom used in situations of social vulnerability related to sexual abuse or sexual risks. Social networks are seen as safer and more realistic protection mechanisms that won't affect in great measure their everyday environment, and do not reduce the scarce assets they count on. Above all, they weigh the consequences of questioning power relations (e.g., between stepfather and stepdaughter, between the master's son and domestic worker) that might generate outcomes that could increase their social vulnerability, such as stopping to receive economic support or becoming unemployed; as well as becoming a target for critics regarding their sexual morals or stigmatizing accusations at school and in their neighborhoods.

This chapter contributes to support HIV research and conceptual frameworks challenging the limitations of explaining sexual risk and addressing prevention with a main or

exclusive focus in individual behaviors and information. Likewise, it adds to the studies about migration and sexual risks, by making visible the spatial production of sexual vulnerability, social risks and sources of prestige and support for low-income youth, which allows understanding their cultural logics and forms of agency within their economic, social and cultural contexts. My study expands these approaches to analyze sexual abuse and sexual risks among low-income youth who received not just information, but were involved in a participatory NGO project focused on youth's sexual rights. This project promoted self-reflection and gave voice to youth, but was not able to impact in structural violence (eg., gender inequalities, racial discrimination, and poverty) underlying both: much of the situations of sexual abuse and sexual risks in Ayacucho, and existent youth responses to social inequalities affecting them.

All my informants participated in workshops about gender equity and sexual rights, and some of them even created slogans, performed sketches, and became peer- educators on these themes. However, the disadvantageous social positions of these youth in age, gender and racial hierarchies organizing everyday relationships in the city of Ayacucho, and their lack of economic and educational opportunities, constrain their capacities to make decisions, and shape their views and priorities about risks. To sum up, social vulnerability is related to sexual vulnerability not only because social vulnerability creates or shapes particular hazards (such as those related to the labor conditions of domestic workers), but also because social vulnerability limits and configures forms of sexual agency among youth, as well as their assets and ways to obtain or deal with social acknowledgment.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL REFLECTIONS

Articulations about the sexuality of youth and social inequality have been barely addressed both in research and social policies and development programs. My dissertation contributes to fill this gap in the literature about the sexual health of youth in Peru. The focus of available qualitative research has been mainly on discourses about sexuality and preventive practices (e.g., Arias and Aramburu 1999; Cáceres, 1999; Quintana andVasquez, 1999; Perez et. al, 2003; Palomino et. al., 2003; Quintana et al. 2003). Although gender inequity is addressed in these studies, they look into sexuality and gender primarily in their symbolic and normative dimensions and barely examine political and economic structures of power interwoven with cultural meanings and norms shaping or constraining individual behaviors and choices. The effects of globalization and transnational discourses about sexual rights and gender equity in youths' sexuality and sexual health in the poorest cities of Peru is explored less, even though some projects and programs addressing these issues have been implemented since the mid of the 1990s. I found a window and a starting point to explore these gaps in the city of Ayacucho, where a three-year NGO participatory project was carried out aimed at the inclusion of low-income adolescents in the implementation of sexual and reproductive health and rights interventions in poor neighborhoods of Ayacucho. In this final chapter I will summarize the ethnographic results of this study about the central questions proposed in the first chapter, and then discuss its contributions for research and policies.

Sexuality, Social Inequalities and Social Hierarchies in Urban Ayacucho

In the following pages, I will go over the main ethnographic findings regarding the three guiding questions of this study. Since the chapters are not organized according to these questions, this is an opportunity to make a transversal reading of them in terms of these inquiries.

1) How are meanings about young people's sexuality related with local social hierarchies and forms of social prestige among low-income youth in urban Ayacucho?

For youth and adults, sexual behavior and sexual reputation are not separated entirely from the social self and value of girls. Virginity of girls is a central axis of sexual hierarchies for the official discourse about sexuality supported by churches, schools and parents. Among both girls and boys, the value of virginity is relative and the main aspect to classify and hierarchize girls is their sexual reputation, which would be achieved not by annulling their sexual desires, but through the auto-regulation and a strategic deployment of of them. The main axis of social and moral classification of girls was their "excess," "moderation" or "lack" of sexual desires and sexual initiative in the ambit of couples' relationships, criteria that were constantly redefined, particularly for girls.

Thus, sexuality was a site in which youth hierarchized, discriminated and excluded girls both through the elaboration of categories of moral classification, and the inclusion or exclusion of these girls in certain types of possible relationships and not other (e.g., stable and serious or temporal and only for fun relationships). In girls' moral classifications the official Catholic discourse (articulated above all by the Catholic Church hierarchy and supported by

families, schools and other institutions) influenced ideals about the “decent” girl. However, at the same time, this religious discourse was reformulated and even questioned regarding the equivalence between virginity and decency, as it was in conflict with other “modern” referents of femininity and feminine sexuality. Most of these gendered sexual classifications were not fixed; on the contrary, they were actively elaborated and contested by youth. Likewise, these categories interacted with geographical and racial-cultural classifications. In the case of heterosexual boys, the categories to classify and hierarchize them rarely appealed to their sexuality or sexual agency, as it was assumed that these were "natural" and not special aspects of their prestige or value as potential partners. Classifications of heterosexual boys were organized according to common negative attitudes and behaviors of boys regarding their partner or potential partner, such as their lack of commitment and loyalty ("*jugadores*" or "*perros*") —most important for girls - or dominated position ("*pisados*", "*saco-largos*")— most important for boys - in couples’ relationships.

At the same time, sexual hierarchies become a source of cultural meanings and moral divisions that served to legitimate other local social structures and forms of inequity in the city of Ayacucho, such as gender, racial, cultural and territorial hierarchies. The hypersexualization or “excess” of sexual desire became a language to express racial and cultural discrimination, as well as homophobia, in a context in which a discourse about sexual rights, sexual diversity, and the backward character of racism has been disseminated among youth who participated in this study.

2) How do different quotidian manifestations of social inequity shape vulnerability of youth to sexual abuse and sexual risks (e.g., non-desired pregnancies, STD and HIV), and their sexual agency to face these situations?

Social hierarchies and inequalities shaped significantly both the sexual agency and sexual vulnerability of low-income youth in urban Ayacucho, affecting their capacity to prevent and face sexual abuse or put into practice preventive practices they learned as advocates in sexual rights in a NGO project to avoid undesired pregnancies, STIs and HIV. Specific information was presented in Chapter 6.

This study identified three interrelated aspects that shape interactions between social hierarchies and inequality, and sexual vulnerability and agency of youth in urban Ayacucho:

-The poverty level and social position of youth in gender and ethnic hierarchies, which suggest a kind of social distribution of risk according to the social position of youth along the axis of poverty and social hierarchies.

-The characteristics, possibilities and limitations of the opportunities and resources available to low-income youth in urban Ayacucho. Social opportunities were related to the organization of domestic and productive labor by gender and age (unpaid domestic labor is mainly the responsibility of the mother and daughters, and productive paid labor is mainly the responsibility of the father, although usually the mother and young children contribute with a minor income), and the range of employment opportunities that are available in the formal and informal sectors. Among social resources, having the two parents and relatively extended social support networks were important, which

defined the need of work, the level of dependence on family members, as well as the connections with potential job sources inside and outside of Ayacucho.

-The social organization of space supported by gendered social norms, which contribute to cover up sexual abuse and risks faced by teenagers in their home. It becomes part of a, sort of geography of risk that generates other risks for youth.

-The ways in which youth make sense of and negotiate with forms of inclusion (or belonging) and recognition offered by local and transnational cultural contexts, particularly when they were valuable and prestigious within their peer networks.

In this sense, I argued that sexual vulnerability was not only the product of poverty and scarce economic opportunities for youth; it was also shaped by gendered sexual cultures and identities, and notions of citizenship and modernity. To sum up, sexual vulnerability among youth was both socially and culturally structured.

Access to available means for social mobility and forms of prestige for low-income youth in urban Ayacucho exposed them to situations of social and sexual vulnerability. Since economic opportunities were scarce in the formal market, these youth worked in insecure and illegal jobs to pay for their education and buy goods associated with modernity and social prestige among their peers. These were quite complex situations that did not occur because of a single factor or circumstance, but a common paradox underlying them was that social and sexual vulnerability became part of the costs of the forms of inclusion and connection of those youth who are, at the same time, subordinated and discriminated against in local social

hierarchies, and excluded or disconnected regarding educational and economic opportunities in the local and global markets.

3) What are the possibilities and limitations of existent sexual rights educational programs to diminish sexual vulnerability of youth facing diverse forms of inequity, such as unequal access to economic and educational opportunities, gender, ethnic and inter-generational disparities?

A surprising finding of this ethnographic study was the omission of a series of serious situations of social and sexual vulnerability of youth in the interventions designed by the NGO with the active participation of these young people, as part of the only project on sexual and reproductive health in Ayacucho. The NGO leading the project made particular efforts to implement a participatory approach in order to include views and experiences of youth related to the prevention of early pregnancies, STIs and HIV, and sexual abuse. However, the type of relationships (e.g., temporal relations as "*agarres*" or "*vacilones*"), "gender games" (e.g., "spin bottle" or betting to seduce a boy) and spaces that are hidden to adults (e.g., taverns) or are part of youth cultures (such as those corresponding to metal-heads, goths or hip-hop culture), were absent or barely mentioned in the "*autodagnósticos*" (self-assessments about the sexual and reproductive health of youth) and other activities of the NGO participatory project. Informative materials and communicational campaigns were focused on socially allowed relationships (love relationship) and their dissemination was conducted primarily in areas dominated by adults and formally associated with sex education (e.g., school and health services, municipal academy). These omissions in the project happened despite the horizontal relationships promoted by the NGO members, and could be related to the fact that they are

still relationships between adults and youth in which youth self-censor or self-protect themselves and speak out only about their concerns and experiences more related to what would be considered "normal" or "allowed" in the world of adults. Another critical issue that divides the "world" sketched in the participatory project and the daily live of youth, was the secondary importance given in the project to the sexual abuse by family members and other adults as a problem to be prioritized and confronted, in spite of its recurrence and severity in the life stories of participants.

However, despite the limitations depicted below, the sexual rights project accomplished its aim of training youth as "*promotores en salud sexual y reproductiva*" ("sexual and reproductive rights advocates") and these young advocates were successful in training other youth in these themes and in public debates. Nonetheless, the ways in which poverty and hierarchies of gender, ethnicity and age organized youths' choices and relationships limited significantly the possibilities for youth to apply discourses about the sexual rights and gender equity they advocated in their everyday life. A critical issue that illustrated this apparent paradox was the way in which girls trained by the project faced sexual abuse.

The NGO followed existing national policies about sexual abuse, which have focused on providing information to adults and youth about where victims can report and receive care, as well as a range of skills and attitudes that would protect children and youth from sexual abuse, such as being assertive and speaking clearly about sexuality (MIMDES 2007). Even more, the NGO stepped forward and promoted both subjective changes (self-awareness, information, self-stem) and the development of social abilities to advocate for sexual rights

and gender equity. In addition, there were a series of meetings to articulate the NGO's work with municipal services (DEMUNA) and other public services for legal and psychological support that could help youth in cases of sexual abuse. It would be assumed that the prevention of an act that had to do with gender- and age-based power relationships at home (and the society) could be faced by knowing what to do and developing personal and community abilities to confront the situation. This assumption, as has been confirmed in this study, was limited. The sexually abused girls knew where to report the crime and they even informed other youth where to do it, but they did not denounce their personal cases. There were several reasons for not denouncing the abuser, which were related mainly with economic dependence of girls and the family of the abuser, as well as fears of being socially discredited, blamed and shamed. In addition, community services where seen by youth as very limited (and they were) to face these serious economic and social consequences of denouncing sexual abuse.

It is impotant to highlight that it is not that the NGO ignored structural factors in their approach to sexual risks and sexual abuse. The strategy to address them consisted manly on influencing state institutions to formulate and implement social policies related to these themes. However, this strategy was less important (which implied less economic resources and time) and effective than the one focused on the community participation of youth.

Research Contributions

This research contributes particularly to two domains of anthropological interest: the political economy of sexuality and the anthropology of youth. In the first case, I explored what may be

termed as the political economy of sexual vulnerability among low-income youth and the multilevel and spatial dynamics by which it was socially and culturally produced. I showed the concrete and complex ways in which political economy structures opearte in the everyday life of youth and shape their social and sexual vulnerability. I argued that social inequality in the context of global capitalism significantly shapes the life opportunities and sexual risks of low-income youth not only because inequality creates social and sexual vulnerability, but also (or mainly) because there are paradoxical and perverse dynamics of inclusion and exclusion which at the same time increased desires for marketed goods and lifestyles, and limited opportunities for obtaining them. These findings are consistent with the body of work studying the consequences of neoliberal globalization for youth in the global South (e.g. Comaroff and Comaroff 1999, 2006; Miles 2002; Honwana and Boeck 2005; Maira and Soep 2005) and reveal complex dynamics between the political economy of sexual vulnerability and sexual rights of youth in the critical ambits of sexual abuse and sexual risks of poor youth. Likewise, I shed light about interactions between structures of political economy and culture. I explored cultural logics (e.g., notions of modernity, inclusion, risk and safety) and meaningful decisions and goals of youth within their socio-economic contexts influenced by both local social hierarchies and globalized cultures of consumption (Chapters 2, 3 and 7).

In the domain of the anthropology of youth, this study pointed out the relevance of relational and intersectional perspectives to address age as a social structure of hierarchy that shapes the social and sexual vulnerability of youth. The notion of intergenerational relations served as an analytical tool to study how situations of vulnerability of young people are socially produced in adult-youth relationships, which challenged the common assumption that

sexual risks are mainly or only related to characteristics of the developmental stage of youth and youth cultures. Likewise, vulnerability and agency of youth are analyzed in the context of articulations of age and other social divisions and hierarchies, such as gender and ethnicity (see Chapter 6). Finally, this research contributed to the study of particular forms of agency among young girls, responding to what has been a primary concern in the anthropology of youth: going beyond a view of youth as reproducers, resisters or victims of adult culture, and acknowledging their cultural agency to re-shape existing meanings, generate critiques or even propose radical changes (Amit-Talai and Wulff 1995; Stephens 1995; Sharp 2002; Bucholtz 2002). First, this approach challenges fixed and universalized social constructions of youth, and allows for understanding them in their own terms neither as autonomous liberal actors nor as an overdetermined victims (Durham 2000). Second, my research contributes to the anthropological theorization of youth culture as a set of dynamic and fluid practices and meanings, without static boundaries established by age, social class or gender (Bucholtz 2002). However, as other authors observed in other contexts and themes (Amit-Talai 1995; Wulff 1995), the diffusion of these youth cultural practices or meanings from one particular situation or group to other is limited by social structures in which youth are emeshed. It is the case of Ayacuchana girls' meanings about virginity which are challenged among them in peer groups or activities supported by the NGO, but could not be "exported" to other contexts or situations with boys and adults because their social position in social hierarchies of age, gender, ethnicity and social class. Third, this research studies complex games of girls to deal with gender power structures and expands the interpretive framework to understand youth forms of agency beyond the dichotomy of reproduction and resistance, which has been a

common place in sociologic and cultural studies about youth (Bucholtz 2002; Willis 1977; Wulff 1995). In this sense, this study contributes from the anthropology of youth to key debates in social sciences about complex and not fixed relationships between agency and structure, and processes of (un) making gender structures in the everyday life. At the same time, this research highlights the need to strengthen the links between anthropological research and public health and development interventions in the fields of sexual abuse and sexual risks, particularly regarding effective ways of empowerment of youth voices in research and interventions, including the reformulation of existing participatory methologies and rights-based educational progams.

Political Economy of Sexuality: Inclusion and Exclusion Dynamics

The political economy of sexuality has contributed to study the ways in which sexuality and particularly the HIV epidemic are embedded within local and global structures of power and inequality in specific cultural contexts (e.g., Farmer 1992, 1999; Hirsch et. al. 2009; Padilla 2007; Parker 1999; Romero-Daza and Himmelgreen 1998; Schoepf 1992). Likewise, these studies and global public health approaches have proposed multilevel interventions for HIV prevention, addressing risk-taking behaviors and social vulnerability reduction (Parker and Aggleton 2012). My research contributes to this body of anthropological work in an area less explored by political economy approaches: sexual abuse and sexual risks of low-income youth self-identified as heterosexual. In addition, the fact that these youth participated in a three-years project of sexual and reproductive rights, revealed the limitations of an educative and advocacy intervention that could not address critical structural factors, such as age,

gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic inequity influencing social and sexual vulnerability of poor youth.

I argued that both forms of social exclusion and social inclusion of low-income youth in Ayacucho were key aspects of the political economy shaping their social and sexual vulnerability, as well as their forms of agency. My focus was on the paradoxical dynamics of social exclusion and inclusion of the neoliberal political economy that, together with local social hierarchies, illuminates both how structural forces shaped the lives of youth, and the ways in which these subjects participate or not in the production of situations of vulnerability. Low-income youth in urban Ayacucho who were economically disadvantaged and socially discriminated against because of their ethnicity and other social divisions, but who had also participated in forms of social and cultural inclusion emerged as part of local and transnational transformations occurred in the last decades (Chapter 2). These forms of inclusion in national and transnational worlds were mainly the massive extension of public education and the expansion of new cultural demands related to commodity culture. To obtain valuable goods, as well as to pay the costs of obtaining higher levels of education (personal maintenance and other expenses during the period of being students), youth "accepted" situations of social and sexual vulnerability in their home and the labor market as they assumed that these were the only ways to achieve belonging, acceptance and recognition in local settings of limited economic opportunities and diverse forms of social and cultural discrimination.

Consumerism as an Entry-Point to Understand Larger Projects

That youth faced risks having as one of their important motivations to buy fashionable cloths, an electronic device or a motorcycle seemed to be a misinterpretation. Instead of simplifying the impact of consumerism among youth or trivializing their aspirations and behavior, this ethnographic study sought to understand cultural logics of youth about fashionable goods. Desired goods for youth in Ayacucho were not valuable only by themselves, but because of their social meanings in an exclusionary but changing and more interconnected society (Chapters 2 and 3). These marketed and prestigious goods are particularly valuable because of their potential to re-position low-income youth in local hierarchies and facilitate their inclusion and recognition in non-discriminatory local groups of youth (mostly rural and poor) and belonging to modern transnational lifestyles and identities. For low-income youth in urban Ayacucho, fashionable clothes and modern electronic devices (for instance, a mobile phone, a Blackberry or a laptop) became a means to be "modern," "whiter" or not be seen as an "*humilde*" person (literally a person of humble origin, meaning a poor person). In this way, this research is consistent with other studies that suggest that the realm of consumption can offer ample spaces for people to find meaning in their worlds (Chin 2001, Hirsch et. al. 2009, Soper 2004; Gabriel and Lang 2005, Lukose 2010). Chin (2001), in her study about consumerism in African-American youth, argued that shopping was used by these youth as a mean to perform commentaries and create connections to friends and other significant people in their surroundings. An important difference regarding Chin's research is that youth in Ayacucho did not make critiques to consumerism through shopping (as youth in the study of Chin did), but used it to challenge local social hierarchies. In a social context where ethnic

and social class hierarchies persisted and were reorganized in spite of a series of political and social transformations, consumerism became a means to equalize and become modern. As Moore says, globalization and capitalism have "transformed" or "reinvented" subjectivities and, in general, social changes alter ways of feeling and understanding, forms of imagining our relations to things, to others, and to ourselves (Moore 2012: 2, 10). As in other places in the global South, I argued that one impact of the globalization in urban Ayacucho, Peru, is the emergence of new cultural demands associated to commodity culture and "consumer citizenship," a way of belonging and recognition grounded on access and control of marketed goods and services. In my study, I showed that consumer practices, in addition to a new flow of ideas, become critical in negotiating masculine and feminine identities, forms of being modern and youthful, ways of being "more" equal in an exclusionary Peruvian society, and forms of being integrated in the transnational world (Chapters 2 and 3). However, even if consumption is a critical dimension of citizenship of poor youth in Ayacucho, but citizenship is not reduced to consumption. Youth are also the product of both local and the global flow of discourses about gender equity and youth's rights disseminated by some public institutions and local NGO projects, such as the one in which my informants were involved. Shopping served as an entry point into larger political projects associated with equity, modernity and citizenship among low-income youth, who are mostly a second generation of rural migrants.

As Liechty (1995) noticed in his study with Nepali youth, a globalized discourse of modernity which constructs identities around commodities, make sense for youth as it intersect with their local and personal histories. It is not just a universalized script that is experienced in the same way for youth around the world. For Ayacuchano youth, notions of

modernity and citizenship associated to their access to commodities intersect with larger projects of democratization and equalization that have not being effective by the formal recognition of rights. The material resources offered in the Peruvian market place for a price offer youth the illusion, or even the real opportunity, to face social hierarchies and forms of power organized by gender, age or ethnicity.

Vulnerability does not Obscure Agency

This study highlights that vulnerability and the absence of agency are not equivalent. The vulnerability approach started to make sense for me as a way to understand the situations in which low-income youth trained on sexual rights framed their personal concerns and felt limited to use what they learned and promoted regarding sexual rights of young people in public arenas. Issues of poverty, gender inequity, ethnic discrimination, parental abuse, and unsafe labor conditions, among other difficult situations, shape these youths' sexual risks, their real choices and decisions regarding their sexuality, and their responses to sexual abuse. However these situations did not eliminate the agency of youth, they undermined it and shaped significantly their choices and forms of agency. In that way, I studied different forms of agency of youth emerging even in the most limited circumstances, and emphasized the need to theorize choice in terms of its social embededness and dynamic relationships with structures. This approach to youth choices allows understanding the cultural logic of girls' silences in facing sexual abuse or the risks they take when go to clandestine or hidden places.

Conceptually, I insisted on studying situations of vulnerability instead of "vulnerable populations" (in this case, "vulnerable youth"), since vulnerability arises from specific

contexts and not from particular groups of individuals, such as low-income youth, indigenous population, children or girls. The central point was avoiding to objectify vulnerability by making it inherent to particular individuals or groups of people, assuming that they were fragile or vulnerable when they were not essentially that way. Likewise, I studied sexual vulnerability considering the integrity of youth and the multidimensionality of sexuality (including sexual practices, sense of dignity, moral issues and sexual identity). In the same way, I explored the interactions between sexual vulnerability and other forms of risk and vulnerability, such as gender inequality, racism and cultural discrimination, homophobia, drug and alcohol use, illegal economy. This approach to vulnerability could offer a more grounded approach of public health policies and development projects of sexual rights, highlighting the need to develop favorable contexts and conditions of possibility of exercising these rights, in addition to informing and empowering youth. Paraphrasing Alice Miller, this view moves the focus from protecting youth from avoiding harm to protecting the rights of these youth and promoting the indivisibility of human rights, as Miller suggests in the case of the sexuality and violence against women, commonly approached as sufferers and victims (Miller 2004).

Geographies of Sexual Vulnerability and Meanings about Risk and Safety

I used the concept of "geographies of sexual vulnerability" to establish the relationships between particular situations of sexual vulnerability and socio-spatial mapping. In doing that, I followed Hirsch and colleagues (2009) in their approach to sexual geographies as physical and social spaces that enable and shape men's extramarital behavior. As I showed in

Chapter7, exploring sexual vulnerability of youth from a geographical perspective illuminates the ways in which these vulnerabilities were socially produced. In the city of Ayacucho, the geography of sexual vulnerability among low-income youth is significantly shaped by the gendered organization of labor markets for youth (e.g., sexual vulnerability of domestic workers and coca production workers) and parental/social structures of control of young girls (sexual vulnerability of youth in clandestine or hidden spaces for leisure). Likewise, a geographic approach to sexual vulnerability facilitated understanding its multilayered character. Although situations of sexual vulnerability occurred in specific spaces (e.g., labor markets or entertainment places), they were produced at different levels. Take for instance, poverty and social structures that control young girls shape their sexual vulnerability by operating in multiple spaces: domestic (e.g., gendered labor division and economic dependence of an adult man; rigid parental norms for daughters and lenient for sons), neighborhood (e.g., abandoned and unsafe public spaces; gossip about girls' sexual behaviors), municipal (e.g., insufficient investment for social development; punitive policies limiting the entrance of youth to entertainment places), regional (e.g., unequal economic opportunities for women) and national (poverty and unequal development of highlands regions).

Spaces of the geography of sexual vulnerability are not only topographic expressions of political economy. This study also showed that physical spaces of sexual vulnerability are cultural spaces where ideologies of sexuality, risk and safety are inscribed, experienced, produced and recreated. The adults' ideology of domestic space as sexually safe, and streets or entertainment spaces as sexually risky for "decent girls" or "*chicas de su casa"* (meaning

literally “girls who are in their home”), are spatially inscribed in the location (close or far from neighborhoods and the center of the city) and visibility (under the vigilance of adults or in hidden and obscure places) of spaces where young girls used to stay. For youth, hidden and zones far from their home are “free zones” and relatively “socially safe” spaces for girls, such as clandestine bars, closed discotheques during afternoons, rural areas far from the city, vacant lots, and obscure spaces. In these spaces of greater freedom there is still the risk to be seen by a relative or their acquaintances, although the probability of that is not as high as if they were around their neighborhood or in other public places (such as parks or populated streets), spaces considered safer by adults and authorities because of the higher probability of being robbed and raped in hidden and obscure spaces. In these hidden or forbidden but freer spaces of entertainment/leisure, young girls shaped and experienced what are termed “social risks” (Chapman 2006; Hirsch et.al. 2009), or risks that may affect their reputation and social position in future gender relations. Consistently with other studies, these social risks tended to eclipse sexual risks even in the case of young people who are advocates of sexual prevention, with some exceptions.

Intergenerational Relationships in the Production of Sexual Vulnerability

This study helped to comprehend the relevance of intergenerational and parent-youth relationships in shaping the sexual vulnerability of youth, particularly in the case of girls. This analytical focus on the production of sexual vulnerability contradicts assumptions that place sexual risks mainly on the psychology or cultures of youth, which had been common in local sexual and reproductive health policies (MINSA 2007).

Forms of parental protection as well as youth responses to parental norms in urban Ayacucho were particularly shaped by significant gaps between a first generation of rural migrants and a second generation (children of these migrants) who grew up in the Andean city of Ayacucho. The concept of generation is an analytical tool that links parents and daughters' gaps and conflicts with significant historical changes in Ayacucho and Peruvian society in the last decades. Mannheim (1993) asserts that generations are groups of youth who came of age at roughly the same time and who mediated processes of cultural change because of their unique historical positioning. In this way, the notion of generation is useful in articulating age-based relationships and broader historical and social processes (Cole and Durham 2007). Parents and their children in poor neighborhoods of urban Ayacucho belong to two generations of Ayacuchanos that have grown in different social worlds and participated in cultural environments that have little relationship to each other. These differences are the result of the consolidation of significant social and cultural changes that occurred in the last decades in Ayacucho (see Chapter 2): the growth of the urban population and the predominance of an urban culture among children of rural migrants, the expansion of higher education, the rise of a consumer culture and the access to transnational youth cultures through the Internet (Hubber 2004), and the end of the critical period of the internal war (1980-1992) between the Peruvian State and the subversive group, Shining Path. Parents came mainly from rural areas and had attained lower levels of education than their children. Most of their children were born in the city of Ayacucho, without exception they were studying in the secondary school and planed to study at a university or other institution of higher education. Children who currently are less than 20 years old are the first generation in

Ayacucho who access to Internet in a massive way. The Internet has provided youth fluid contact with manifestations of transnational culture (such as metal, hip hop, gothic or emo cultures), new models of gender identity, and new forms of sociability (such as virtual social networks) that are unfamiliar to their parents. Likewise, youth were involved in a project where they talked openly about their sexuality, sexual risk prevention and sexual rights, which was not only new, but perceived as dangerous by their parents, with some exceptions (two mothers who received training in family planning as *promotoras de salud* or health promoters). These generational gaps are larger and more noticeable between mothers and their daughters than between fathers and their sons because adult men had more access to educational opportunities, free expression and mobility than adult women. It is especially important to notice that as it happened with the second generation of rural migrants in other urban places of the global South (e.g., Lietchy 1995; Miles 2000), girls were living a life-stage in which their mothers have a limited experience, a period that they called adolescence. Most of the girls' mothers had children when they were between 16 and 18 years old; most of my interviewees did not have children yet, they were studying and working, and planed to continue studying.

Parent-daughter relationships were an example of the ways in which members of different generations of poor families participate in modernization and globalization processes, which accelerated in the last decades in Ayacucho. Youth participated in the expansion of public higher education, a growing culture of consumption that promises new identities and lifestyles integrated to a modern world, and new discourses about gender equality, sexuality and rights. These changes coexist with unsafe and badly-paid labor

opportunities, unchanged authoritarian forms of parental power and diverse forms of inequity in gender relations in their home and the street. As in the case of girls studied by Miles (2000) in Cuenca, Ecuador, low-income girls in Ayacucho, Peru, navigated between their own aspirations, desires and discriminated social position; and their parents' understandings of gender and parental authority (Miles 2000). The "benefits" for parents were less clear than for their children, their opportunities in the labor market were scarce, and their work conditions were poor because the regional economy is not part of a process of modernization, and the greater demand is in the informal and illegal market. For parents, the hope of progress in a changing context is through their children in the future, both daughters and sons. For that, for parents, protecting their daughters from an early pregnancy is taking care of both the girl and the family's progress; the opposite situation is summarized in the popular phrase: "*embarazo es atraso*"("pregnancy is backwards").

Intergenerational gaps were particularly significant in the sexuality of girls. In a changing city and in the face of more liberal girls, parents increased their fears and were stricter with their daughters regarding the places they visited and their time away of their homes. However, girls were not willing to acquiesce to parental restrictions and went to hidden and clandestine spaces for exercising their freedom as far as possible out of the sight of their parents and relatives. In this context of dealing with parental and adult norms situations of social and sexual vulnerabilities emerged, as has been discussed above, when discussing the notion of "geographies of sexual vulnerability."

Underlying parents' concerns were practical and moral reasons related with something that had not changed in the Ayacuchana city, that "*las mujeres tienen más que perder*"

(“women have more to lose”): the sexual behavior of girls could seriously affect their future because unplanned pregnancies and the decrease of their moral prestige, as they later remained as a fundamental asset for girls. Girls agreed with their parents regarding this point, but they navigated gender games of sexual reputation (see Chapter 5) in different ways. Parents thought that the only legitimate (or socially correct) way to protect girls was to delay their sexual initiation by protecting them at home or through the supervision by family members. For girls, there were other options, such as using birth control and the morning-after pill, or simply by "knowing well with whom to get involved," meaning a guy who can take responsibility for an unwanted pregnancy. These differences were framed by intergenerational gaps in cultural logics and moral hierarchies grounded on the sexuality of girls as it was analyzed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Sexual Abuse and the Perils of Ideologies of Domestic Space as Sexually Safe

This research showed that sexual abuse of girls at home in Ayacucho was supported by the combination of adults’ ideologies of the domestic space as sexually safe, and gendered parental power regimes; both aspects contributed to making this crime invisible and unspeakable. The sort of forced pact of silence around sexual abuse committed by family members was favored by a context of poverty and gender violence. It is not that the young women accepted or were resigned to sexual abuse. On the contrary, they questioned critically the protective and authority role of their step-fathers and abusers, but found it dangerous to denounce them because it could provoke their violent responses or challenged their familes’ precarious economic livelihood, and even their personal hopes for a better future.

A fact that deserves particular attention was the absence of the issue of sexual abuse committed by family members in both fathers and mothers' narratives about dangers and forms of protection. This theme requires more exploration than I could do in this study, as parents interviewed were few (as key informants), and it was not possible to contact parents of sexually abused youth. However, here I explore some clues for further research.

According to youth, sexual abuse at home was absent in advice, norms and strategies of vigilance of their parents. Parents argued that sexual abusers at home were depicted as depraved or sick men, exceptions to the norm that were not expected in the families of the interviewees. However, several cases of sexual abuse at home were known among adults in neighborhoods and disseminated by local media or public institutions. Narratives of youth and adults about how youth contested parental regimes of power and authority (in comparison with the experience of parents and grandparents) and regarding the negative influences of discourses about the empowerment of youth ("they only see rights but not their duties"), suggests that accepting the probability of sexual abuse at home could put in question fundamental assumptions that support parental authority, their norms and forms of protection of their children regarding sexual risks. If a mother would identify the father or stepfather as a potential abuser, it could deny his role as authority or protector of the moral order (focused on the control of women's sexuality) supporting parental norms. Likewise, it would question the association between home and safety, and street and dangers, underlying parental norms regarding allowed places to go and stay. Parents and other adults insisted on the idea that home was the only place associated to protection and to decent girls, a sort of "last bastion" of

safety and moral protection for girls since school and parish were also spaces where girls could meet with boys and being tempted by them.

Invisibility and unspeakability of sexual abuse could not only be related to a parental order and their norms for sexual protection. The silence was also associated with gender and age imbalance in power relations at home where, in most of the cases, the father was the main provider and the "head" of the family. Vulnerability situations are favored by a structure of vertical relationships between adults and teenagers and between parents and children. This structure associates protection with family control and children's obedience, which ultimately facilitates aggressors' justifications for having control and authority over teenagers and limits trust building and communication for girls to tell their mothers that their fathers or other adults abused them. Thus, familial and intergenerational relationships of power dominated by adult men, and ideologies of domestic space as sexually safe, could be considered to be part of the social production of sexual abuse, since they allow it to continue to be perpetrated by making it invisible and unspeakable.

Sexuality as a Site of Agency of Girls

In analyzing sexuality as site of agency and youth as social agents, this study followed Ortner's (1996, 2006) approach to agency, which includes three relevant dimensions: intentionality, cultural logics and power. Under this understanding of agency, I analyzed different types of agency of girls in Ayacucho, identifying their goals, motivations and strategies to seek their aims; framing their goals and strategies within their cultural logics, and

contextualizing these forms of agency in the social relations of inequity and power in which youth are engaged.

There were at least two forms in which sexuality became a site of personal agency of girls in Ayacucho. Sexuality was a site where these young girls struggled for meanings about moral categories grounded in their sexual behavior and sexual initiative; and sexuality was a domain where they built their reputation as a social asset and strategized for better conditions to negotiate their gendered position in their future relationships.

Re-creation of Sexual Meanings: Cultural and Moral Agency

This study showed that a group of teenage girls has developed cultural and moral agency to question and reformulate adults' categories of sexuality, sexual agency, dignity and self-worth of girls. These girls followed cultural logics different from the ones supporting their parents and teachers' discourses of the "decent women" or of the NGO discourse of sexual rights and gender equity. Some teenage girls made the issue of virginity a field of constant dispute, transgression and resignification, both in formal (e.g., in lectures or classes where they used the new information and discourses provided by the NGO Jóvenes Huamanguinas) and informal spaces (eg., leisure and hang out spots).

Analyzing these forms of girls' cultural and moral agency reinforced anthropological work about the need to study youth as producers of culture, and not only as reproducers of adults' culture or objects of adults' activity (Caputo 1995; Stephens 1995; Sharp 2002; Durham 2004; Bucholtz 2002). Moreover, a particular contribution of this study is questioning the dichotomy between "producers" and "reproducers" (Milles 2000) of culture from a dialectic view of agency and structure in the field of the creation of gender and

sexuality meanings. This interplay between production and reproduction reveals the double character of culture as enabling and constraining (Ortner 2006) and the dynamic relationship between culture and the social position of agents. This research also shows the power of ethnography to explore culture and agency beyond known or institutionalized spaces. Culture is both produced and reproduced in the everyday lives of youth, including their jokes, parties and consumer practices. In this sense, I proposed that gendered playful games of girls are also serious games in the sense that Ortner defined them, as models of practice that captures the complex relationships between agents' subjectivities and practices, and structural constraints of society and culture. My point is precisely that youth, and especially girls, used playful forms (e.g., teasing, taunting, betting) to speak about "big" and serious issues related to their sexuality and sexual agency because these games were a form of interaction and narrative that allowed them to make "serious" inquiries about forms of inequality, hierarchy or exclusion, without taking the risk of being sanctioned, expulsed or losing the game through punishment or stigmatization. Furthermore, I observed that jokes were common and accepted forms of communication between girls and boys regarding shameful or forbidden issues and were part of daily interactions among peers and with adults in relation to different themes and topics.

Girls felt supported by the feminist NGO's discourse regarding the rights of girls and boys to make informed and free decisions about their sexuality, but apart from a few exceptions, they did not frame their critiques of virginity and girls' decency by using a language of sexual rights and gender equity beyond public discussions in formal spaces (school classes or church meetings). These girls' ideas and struggles for meaning in more intimate interactions were embedded in local cultural interpretations about sexuality and in

their social experience and relationships (or "practical sense"), which clearly challenged or competed with the sexual rights discourse. Young women critiqued the virgin/whore ("*zorra*") dichotomy and these categories themselves to assess the value and reputation of girls by using mainly three narratives: the narrative of "sexual needs of all human beings," which recognized that girls also have that kind of need or "*debilidad*" (weakness), the narrative of sex as legitimated by love, and the narrative of the multidimensionality of girls' value (not only because of their sexual behavior). In all these cases, girls needed a special reason to justify or legitimize sexual initiation and sexual desires, whereas in the case of boys there was not this need because of reasons related to their attributed biology and different nature. In addition, girls created and used other categories for classifying young women among their peers according to their ability to control and express sexual attraction and desires, particularly in a context of girls' competition in their ability to be seductive.

Self-regulation of Sexual Desires and Sexual Reputation as a Key Social Asset

Sexual reputation of girls was considered a key social asset or resource to make them more valuable to potential suitors and thus would facilitate having better opportunities to get a good partner and more equal conditions to negotiate with their stable partner in the future. In conceptual terms, the notion of sexual reputation as a social asset or resource is connected to theories of bargaining (Nathanson and Schoen 1993) and sex markets (Launman et. al. 2004;), which helps to understand the social value of sexual reputation as a resource to exchange. Likewise, the concepts of "gender games" and "agency of projects" (Ortner 2006),

contribute to analyze this social exchange within the broader cultural formations, strategies and projects of the subjects.

Framing youth goals and strategies from bargaining theory, I showed that sexual reputation is an important social asset for girls in their current and future relationships with men in Ayacucho and beyond. Sexual reputation of boys is also important but mainly in their relationships with other boys. For girls, the sexual reputation or the number of sexual partners of their potential boyfriends was not an issue. The respect and dignity associated with the control of girls' sexual desires were considered assets in the market of sexual couples and their potential social mobility (Chapter 5). Boys would exchange other resources that girls valued, such as respect and fidelity, affection, protection, money and status, in the hopes of getting a girl with a good sexual reputation. Then, "even though in one sense a man and a woman who are having sexual intercourse are both doing similar things, socially they are doing quite different things" (Baumeister and Vohs 2004: 341). This idea of sex as a women's resource for exchange in heterosexual relationships illuminates a key aspect of girls' narratives and strategies in Ayacucho: the gendered value of sexual reputation in heterosexual partnering as part of social interactions structures (Launman et. al. 2004). In their present and future relationships, girls expected to exchange sexual reputation for boys' fidelity and respect. However, an exchange approach could simplify both women´s and men's intentions and motivations to get a partner and did not address how this gendered exchange is related or not with the agency of subjects, with their goals or projects, and their power to influence or challenge gender relations with their partners.

The notions of "gender games" and "the agency of projects" allowed a more complex analysis about different forms of agency of girls related with their gender and sexuality, respectively. The gender games perspective contextualized narratives and practices of girls about their sexual reputation and sexual agency, framing them within their social relations and exploring goals and projects of girls as social subjects with meaningful intentions. The notion of the agency of projects (related to intentions and people's ability to enact them) used by Ortner (2006) and Hirsch and colleagues (2009), served to explore girls' meaningful goals and plans related to their management of sexual agency and sexual reputation. These projects or cultural goals can be considered themselves gender games that emerge in and are shaped by local relations of power (Ortner 2006:145). In exploring these girls' projects, sexuality could be analyzed in their multiple articulations with the production of social life, in addition to individual desires, sexual education, or sexual rights and gender equity awareness, which where the dimensions addressed by the NGO who trained these youth as sexual and reproductive health advocates.

There were two common projects among girls related to apparently divergent models and goals of femininity promoted in their social and cultural contexts, but also shaped strategies of girls to navigate in these contexts. One of the projects of girls was oriented to being a "modern" girl (less rural, more urban and even cosmopolitan girls) who was open to urban and transnational models of femininity, fashion and lifestyles, which included pursuing higher education, not being subordinate to men, wearing fashionable cloths and being sexually attractive girls (see Chapters 3 and 5). A more long-term project was having a stable partner (boyfriend or husband) and a partner relationship in which they could claim fidelity

and respect. In the experiences of the young women interviewed, having sexual relations with "anybody" or with many partners ruined their sexual reputation and affected significantly those possibilities. On the contrary, girls knew that their sexual reputation were important in improving conditions for future negotiations with partners with whom they could potentially have stable relationships. Beyond what they had learned in the training activities of the feminist NGO, the girls knew by experience that increasing their gender agency to negotiate with potential future partners implied reducing or regulating their sexual desires and sexual initiative. In the realm of girls' concrete relationships, the sexual behavior of women was linked to their prestige, which would be a kind of social capital or moral asset that could mediate the other hierarchies and existing forms of social differentiation. Accordingly, a key axis in the gender games of girls was being cautious regarding to appear having an "excess" of sexual desire and sexual initiative. For that, girls developed a series of strategies to pursue two apparently contradictory projects: being a modern girl that enjoy certain autonomy and freedom in their gender and sexual appeal and interactions, and avoid sexual stigmatization and bad reputation that could ruin their future project about "getting a good husband" and equitable partner relationship. A recurrent strategy of girls was "*poner límites*" (placing limits), for instance, seducing a boy but limiting the opportunity to have sexual relationships with him, showing sexy pictures of themselves on Internet, but remarking that they are "innocent" girls or that they have different purposes than exhibiting their physical beauty or sensuality. Another strategy was being very selective about potential sexual partners and careful strategists to not show what would be judged as "a lack of shame" or "excess" regarding their initiative with boys, or the number of known boyfriends or eventual

relationships. Through their strategies, girls enacted different projects and modified the rules of the game proposed by the discourse of virginity and absolute sexual restrain, supported by the Catholic Church's official discourse and by other institutions. To sum up, the strategies of girls to play existing gender games was an agentic act of self-regulation, a strategic move for accomplishing future projects of greater gender equity in a context shaped by systems of inequality and prestige limiting girls' opportunities and autonomy. In this way, the perspective of gender games allowed going beyond explanations about individual contradictions between discourse and practices of girls trained as sexual rights advocates, or the failure of sex education programs because of the persistence of a local culture influenced by official Catholic values.

Types of Agency: Beyond Reproduction or Change of Social Structures

The strategies of girls in gender games showed how agency was culturally constructed and socially situated in a myriad of power relations faced by girls in Ayacucho. They also illustrated that agency was gendered (Wardlow 2006), and as gender was not a stable category, girls' forms of agency were related to changes in gender identities, projects and opportunities. In urban Ayacucho, gendered forms of agency of girls were related to a series of social and cultural transformations generated by rural-to-urban migration, expansion of public education, and the broader diversification of different images and narratives about femininity and sexuality. At the same time, these forms of gender agency showed continuities in cultural logics (girls' control and moderation of their sexual desires and initiative increase their moral value and social position) and social relations (girls are accountable for an

"excess" of sexual desires but not boys). In that sense, I needed going further to the categories proposed by Wardlow (2006) to make distinctions among different "types of agency" of women according to their relation to the reproduction or change of social structures of power.

A type of agency of girls in Ayacucho could be named "strategic agency" or "preventive/protective agency" as it was oriented to achieve or defend their more long-term project and difficult goal of broadening their opportunities in the sexual and gender domain by using an available assets they have for that purpose: girls' sexual reputation. It is important to remember that most of the girls shared, at least, part of the cultural logic of the game that promotes a social and moral hierarchy among girls according to their sexual agency and number of sexual partners. However, there were key differences between the moral views of adults and youth, particularly girls, about the sexual agency of young women. For most of the girls, to remain a virgin until marriage did not define them in moral terms, but they estimated that what is important is with whom and why the girls had sex (no to have many sexual partners and having sex with "anybody," but with "significant" partners). What was valuable for these girls was not the repression of their sexual agency, but the moderation of it. For girls, it was culturally meaningful self-controlling their sexual agency not necessarily to be a "decent" or "*digna*" girl, but to avoid a sort of imbalance between men and women in their efforts of seduction and conquest, which is a way of giving too much power and importance to boys. Then, the gender games are at the same time reproduced and changed in the interplay of girls and boys, by the simultaneous reproduction of meanings and social relations focused on the regulation of girls' sexual desires and the stretching of the rules and goals of the game in favor of more sexual opportunities for girls.

Implications for Policies and Programs

Youth who participated in this study, attended, with different degrees of involvement, the activities of a three-year NGO project to promote the sexual and reproductive health and rights of low-income youth in Ayacucho. This project was conducted by the NGO Jóvenes Huamanguinas (pseudonym), having as its main strategies the active participation of youth and establishing alliances with health and education institutions. In this dissertation I did not analyze this project in detail, but I want to reflect on some of the lessons and suggestions for public health policies and programs in sexual and reproductive health arising from the experiences of youth. These reflections are based on the experience of this project, but aim to go beyond of it, considering the importance of the NGO in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights and adolescents in Peru, and the relative extension of participatory approaches and methodologies in this field (Yon 2013).

Approaches to Understanding and Promoting Sexual Health of Youth

This ethnographic study revealed much more complex and diverse situations that produce social and sexual vulnerability of low-income youth than those that the participatory NGO project took into account in their interventions to prevent sexual risks and promote sexual rights among these youth in Ayacucho. To bridge this gap, this research suggests the need to assess the potential and limitations of participatory approaches (like the one implemented by the NGO and other institutions in Peru and other countries) to know and address the range and complexities of situations of sexual vulnerability of youth. This participatory approach articulated a self-diagnostic of problems to change, and empowerment of the subjects through

the development of individual and collective self-awareness and the production of knowledge about their problems. However, participatory diagnosis ("*autodiagnósticos*") based on self-assessment and discussion groups from which the NGO's interventions were designed- could not reveal themes considered taboo for youth or which are punished by adults, particularly in the case of girls. In addition, these "*autodiagnósticos*" were limited forms to contextualize and comprehend interpersonal relationships and personal views in the frame of a broader cultural and political economic context. This methodological approach to the sexual health and rights of youth would reinforce, unintentionally, interventions more focused on information and awareness about sexual rights and risks of youth, and barely articulate broader social changes of situations that produce social and sexual vulnerability of these young people. A greater focus on individuals, their self-awareness and empowerment would also reinforce an approach to sexual risk as a category inherent to youth behaviors and hide structural factors shaping them.

Participatory approaches commonly used in public health and development projects can have a more productive relationship with conceptual and methodological contributions of anthropological research. For instance, the concept of "geography of sexual vulnerability" can be a useful tool for understanding how sexual risk is socially and culturally constructed within different spaces that compound the everyday life of youth (see Chapters 3 and 6). Furthermore, this concept can be helpful to define social spaces of public health interventions and design culturally meaningful strategies of prevention in these spaces (Hirsch et al. 2009). Ethnographically mapping the spatial organization of sexual vulnerability of youth in urban Ayacucho revealed that public health interventions there need to develop a strategy to address

sexual abuse in the domestic space, which is culturally considered to be a sexually safe space for girls. Likewise, leisure spaces for youth hidden for adults (e.g., including taverns, discos, concerts) can be included in preventive interventions taking into account the concerns, dynamics ("gender games") and languages of youth, rather than focusing only on institutionalized spaces dominated by adults, such as schools or academies.

In the ambit of social relationships of youth, this research shows the urgent need of including intergenerational and familial relationships in the understanding of the production of sexual vulnerability, in addition to the gender, social class and ethnic relationships, which are more present in Peruvian NGO projects and some state policies. Intergenerational relationships were central in producing notions about the risks of youth and their hidden spaces were constructed to avoid adults' punishment and vigilance. Intergenerational and familial power relationships favored the sexual abuse of girls at home and limited informational and awareness strategies focused only on youth to stop sexual abuse. This situation suggests the need of including specific interventions with both adults and youth, to improve an intergenerational dialogue regarding sexual risk prevention, and to strengthen social support (within and beyond their family) for girls in situations of sexual abuse. Implementing particular strategies to address sexual abuse in specific vulnerable labor situations, as it is the case of domestic workers, is also needed.

Sexual Health and Social Policies: Beyond Information and Individual Approaches

In this study, I showed the ways in which social discrimination and inequalities in access to power and resources are associated, directly or indirectly, with sexual abuse and sexual risk

among adolescents. My analysis, focused on the connections between social vulnerability and sexual risk, allows seeing how sexual risks are related to characteristics of the opportunities and limitations of the resources available to low-income youth in Ayacucho. These sexual risks are related to their social position in hierarchies organized around ethnicity (domestic workers), gender (domestic workers and other sexually abused adolescents; trafficking and forced prostitution of adolescents), the condition and type migration (workers in the zone of coca and cocaine production in Ayacucho), as well as to the various intersections that exist between these categories of social organization.

Connections between social inequality and sexual risks do not follow a deterministic or unidirectional pattern, as this research illustrates through different situations of social and sexual vulnerability, and forms of agency of low-income youth. However, it is clear that the cases analyzed in this study questioned a sexual risk approach focused only on individual behavior and a dichotomous view of the individual and society, which creates the illusion or fallacy that programs limited to the dissemination of preventive information and personal empowerment are enough to prevent undesired pregnancies, STIs, and sexual abuse among youth. This approach, which has been the main interpretive framework for sexual health policies and programs in Peru (Cáceres et al. 1999; Cáceres et al. 2008; Chavez and Cisneros 2004) to prevent sexual and reproductive risks among youth, limits these interventions and separates them from other set of social policies for social inclusion and equity, such us policies for mitigation of poverty, improving the quality of public education, promoting adequate employment for youth, or for facing domestic violence and sexual abuse of children

and youth. In general terms, this research highlights the urgent need of a more enabling (Petchesky 2000, 2003) and contextualized approach to sexual health and sexual rights.

Taking into account the social conditions that shape the vulnerability of girls to sexual abuse in Ayacucho, its continuity and impunity, policies and programs would have to consider at least two structural levels of intervention suggested by the cases analyzed in this study. First, policies must provide better economic and educational opportunities for poor women to make them less economically dependent on men as the main breadwinners. This could be an effective strategy to increase the autonomy and self-esteem of women and help them face a series of abuses of power, including sexual abuse of their daughters and violence against themselves. Additionally, consistent policies of secular sex education for children and adults are needed, which might open space for youth and their parents to frame women's sexuality from a human rights perspective and disengage it from notions of guilt and shame (when it is not within marriage relationships and associated with sexual reproduction), which is one important reason for the silencing and stigmatization of victims of sexual abuse.

In sum, we should consider approaching sexuality and sexual and reproductive health and rights as part of a broader field of social relations and access to opportunities, assets and forms of social recognition. Finally, development projects and social policies implicitly or explicitly assumed an interpretative framework about social change. My study offers some insights into how to conceptualize and take actions for social change needed to prevent sexual abuse and sexual risks among low-income youth in urban Ayacucho and beyond.

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